AARONOVITCH: MYPLANTO .. but will William Hague approve? COMMENT, PAGE 21



THE FOOTBALL NATION RULED by drugs Tragedy of England's **World Cup opponents**

SPORT, PAGE 22



Newspaper of the Year for photographs

Saturday 25 April 1998 70p (IR 70p)

^alia t for rton

Today's news Russia elects PM at last

with little political experience, yesterday became Russia's Prime Minister, ending a confrontation between Kremlin and parliament that plunged the country into a month-long. limbo. Boris Yeltsin's protégé was confirmed In his job by a comfortable margin after the State Duma, or lower house, caved in on its third and final vote on his nomination. The new premier will present his line-up for a new cabinet to the President next Tuesday, the new government is expected to begin work by the end of next week. A triumphant Mr Yeltsin, who precipitated the crisis by sacking the government on 23 March, went on television to declare the result a victory for reason over emotion ... Full story page I

Grampian police chief resigns

Chief Constable Ian Oliver, the beleaguered head of the Aberdeen-based-Grampian police force, resigned last night following pressure over the force's mis-handling of the murder of nine year old Scott Simpson by a well-known paedophile.

Olympic chief in royal rejection

THE mastermind of the millennium Sydney Olympics provoked outrage yesterday by Queen to open the games.

Constitutional experts rounded on the comments by Joan Coates, saying Australiarelations with Britain. Mr. Coates, who is co-ordinating the Sydney Games in 2000, said the decision on who should open the millernial olympiad should reflect the current views of Australians:

Set-piece Labour

NEW card-carrying Labour members should be warned - they have been nominated for a LA tole in a sketch written by party managers. 7.30 finispers and MPs have been circulated with g a proposed "script" suggesting how they * should contacting members of the party who joined before the election and whose membership needs renewal: Page 6.-

Boycott quits 'Indy'

THE EXPRESS titles have poached Rosie Boycott, editor of The Independent and Independent on Sunday, to create a "new midmarket newspaper". Andrew Marr. editor in-chief of the two titles, has temporarily resumed the editor's chair until new appointments are made.

Business news

Economy slows

INFLADICAL doves" on the Bank of England's Hoperay Policy Committee were given further administration against hawks given fur det annieussion against hawks vesterday. Consignment figures showed the accounty great in the first quarter of this year by 0.4 per dead the lowest rate since and 1995. Economists do por now expect interest rates to the peop month. Page 24

Argos taken over

over yesterday after it lost a fiercely contested talgiover bid launched by Great Uni-versal Stores, Britain's largest home shopping company. GUS, whose interests in chide the Kay's catalogue and the Burberry clothing brand, is paying £1.9bn for Argos, which lies 439 stores in Britain and a small operation in Holland Report, page 14.

Sports news

Hill revs himself up

DAMON HILL Britain's former FI champion, admitted that he needs to improve on his disappointing performances this season. As he prepared for tomorrow's San Marino Grand Proc. If said he had developed a healthy respect for his fordan colleague, Ralf Schumacher, who has outpaced him in all three qualifying sessions so far Time Off, Page 26



Key players: Chess pieces by the Belfast artist Anto Brennan caricature Northern Ireland's leading political figures. A set costs £1,500

Loyalist gunmen back the peace deal

LOYALIST paramilitaries last night threw their weight behind the Northern Ireland peace agreement and called for a "Yes" vote in the referendum next month.

The endorsement by the Ulster Defence Association and Ulster Freedom Fighters came on the eve of the annual conference of their political representatives, the Ulster Democratic Party, at which leader Gary McMichael is due to make a strong call to back the agreement.

Sinn Fein chairman Mitchel McLaughlin yesterday met with IRA inmates at the Maze Prison to hear their opinion on the deal.

It will be taken to a Sinn Fein conference in mid-May at which the party will decide its position on the agreement. They are expected to call for a "Yes" vote in the referendums on both sides of the border.

Trimble denial, page 4

Vigilantes target child-killers

offenders was wrecking efforts to monitor paedorbiles.

The Association of Chief Officers of Probation issued a report around the country where public disorder has hampered attempts to keep sex offenders under supervision. The report was issued as police and anti-paedophile groups

PROBATION chiefs warned last thrown at the station, in the real damage is being done to in- moved and probation staff man- Michael yesterday insisted that outside police stations in Yeovil. tacks and the public "outing" of sex leaving 46 police officers injured. Two were concussed by flying missiles and one was scorched by burning petrol.

Police said a "rent-a-mob" gang detailing 40 serious incidents from of around 60 rioters, including children as young as eight who threw bricks, had hijacked a peaceful protest by around 300 people. A dozen people were arrested.

Gill Mackenzie, vice chairyesterday appealed for calm after woman of the Association of Chief rioters attacked a police station in Officers of Probation, said that Bristol where they believed the many of the serious incidents re-report noted.

child-killer Sidney Cooke was be- ferred to in the report had hap- MAn offender under 24-hour po- had to be moved after vigilantes who was moved to the area from pened in the last few months. lice surveillance in the North was threatened to nail him to a tree. London a week ago. Rumours Petrol bombs and bricks were "This gives us firm evidence that "outed" by a tabloid newspaper. He ple taking the law into their own

> hands," she said. "Existing vital and effective supervision and surveillance operations are being destroyed."

> Among the incidents detailed in the report were:

■ The abandonment of police surveillance of a high-risk offender in the Midlands after local press identified and contacted him. "Tracking his movements is currently causing problems," the

offering to babysit. But he moved again and is now untraceable.

■ Photographs of an offender were put up around local schools in Wales. He was being monitored by police and probation but quickly disappeared.

A local newspaper in the North of England named and pictured a convicted sex offender. Another man living in the same block of flats was mistaken for him and given a severe beating.

■ An offender in the South-west

Home Office minister Alun have prompted demonstrations

vision by Avon and Somerset police and could pose no threat. "The Chief Constable has made that absolutely clear. Now, it's that assurance that the public

need - it's certainly the assurance that as a parent and grandparent I would look for," he said.

Cooke was released from jail earlier this month after serving nine years for the manslaughter of teenager Jason Swift. Avon and Somerset police have refused to say

erset as well as Bristol. People living near the scene of last night's riot condemned those responsible for the violence.

Jane Thomas, 34, said: "This was supposed to be a peaceful demonstration but it was taken over by a mindless minority of

"They have achieved nothing and it makes me very angry to think we are all going to be seen as riwhere they are holding the killer, demonstrate against this man."

Traffic wardens to get powers similar to police

By Jason Bennetto Crime Correspondent

THE motorist's ultimate nightmare could soon become reality - traffic wardens with real power.

For years the world's "most hated profession" has had to make do with terrorising stationary vehicles and their owners, but police chiefs and the Home Office are currently considering letting them loose on moving traffic.

Along with the extra powers to pull over motorists, the traffic wardens are expected to suffer an even greater amount of verbal and physical abuse.

There are also expected to be fresh calls for the country's several thousand "yellow perils" to be fitted with bullet and stab-proof

Some wardens in Cardiff have already been issued with flak-jackets, which can withstand the biast of a 357 magnum handgun at close

Under the proposals, policeemployed wardens, or "little Hitlers" as they are sometimes nicknamed, would be allowed to stop motorists and fine them if they were caught driving in bus lanes, illegally entering box junctions or cudangering pedestrians at zebra



Risky business: Wardens have en shot at, run over, punched

They could also be allowed to pull over vehicles and have them tested by anti-pollution officers. At present only police officers have the power to stop a moving ve-

Only wardens employed by the police rather than council ticket inspectors would be affected.

The plans were revealed yesterday by Paul Manning chairman of the Association of Chief Police Officers' traffic committee. He said the association was in discussion with ministers about the issue. He argued that the changes would free officers for more important work.

He added that a "risk assessment" would have to be carried out to consider whether body armour

In the past three years wardens in Wiltshire and Wolverhampton have been shot with air rifles. Others have been dragged behind cars, run over and punched.

Fewer than half think Labour is trustworthy

By John Rentoul

A YEAR after the election, fewer Labour government is "honest and a bit more humility would not come trustworthy", according to an opin- amiss." ion poll carried out for The Independent by Harris Research.

Only 49 per cent said the Government has, "on balance, been honest and trustworthy", while 39 per cent said it had not. This marks a change since last June, when 78 per cent described the new administration as honest in an identicallyworded Gallup poll question.

Today's anniversary poll suggests that the adverse publicity attracted by the refurbishment of the Lord Government, but that the Prime Minister has emerged unscathed.

Harris asked voters to distinguish ple but some of his ministers do not". its record in these areas. Smaller numbers (20 per cent) thought that both Mr Blair and his ministers understood their problems, or that neither Mr Blair nor his ministers did (27 per cent).

Altogether, this means 73 per cent thought that at least some of Mr Blair's colleagues were out of touch,

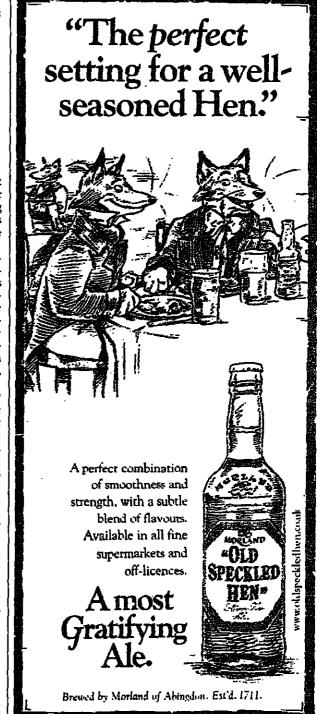
while a total of 66 per cent thought the Prime Minister understood their problems. Tom Simpson, managing than half of the electorate think the director of Harris, said: "It suggests

> Mr Blair's personal rating has declined since the post-election euphoria of last summer, but remains at record levels, with 75 per cent saving he had done a "good job" in the last year and only 17 per cent saying he had done a "bad job". These figures compare with Mr Blair's unprecedented 93 per cent score in a abour Party poll after the election, which was leaked to the press. More worrying for Mr Blair is The

Independent's finding that more Chancellor's apartments and the people - 16 per cent - think public break-up of the Foreign Secretary's services, such as the NHS have got marriage have hurt the image of the worse since the election than think they have got better - 12 per cent. The Prime Minister repeatedly urges his critics to focus on the "real" isbetween Mr Blair and other ministers sues, including health and education, on the issue of whether they "under- which he says matter most to voters. stand the problems of ordinary peo- However, 65 per cent, think public ple". Nearly half the sample, 46 per services have stayed the same, which cent, agreed that "Mr Blair under- supports the Government's constands the problems of ordinary peo- tention that it is too early to judge

Poll details, page 2





INSIDE GUIDE: WEATHER, P2 CROSSWORDS, TIME OFF, P12, 26 TODAY'S TELEVISION, THE EYE FULL CONTENTS, P2

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Apocalypse Now-the airshow: Pink Floyd's Dave Gilmour brings Vietnam to Britain

Story of my life: Whoopi Goldberg on sex, race and love

1968 remembered: The revolution that never was

IN MONDAY'S INDEPENDENT

Billericay boy: Deborah Ross meets Tony **Parsons**

Football crazy: how advertisers are exploiting the World Cup

CONTENTS

Foreign Features Leader & letters Comment Obituaries Time Off Crosswords TV & radio Time Off 12.26



Blair takes heat over links to Murdoch

THE Prime Minister came in for scathing criticism yesterday for what opposition members described as "an incestuous relationship" with media tycoon Rupert Murdoch.

Labour's chief press officer Alastair Campbell and Minis-Mandelson also came under fire and were accused by Liberal Democrat MP Norman Baker of tarnishing the Government.

The MP for Lewes urged Mr Blair to examine his connections with the owner of the Sun and the Times, control his spin doctors and act like "New Labour, not Old Tory."

"No offence" must be caused to Mr Murdoch, and a Lords Bill to curb his predatory pricing in newspaper circulation war would be overturned. said Mr Baker.

He also claimed that the Government's spin doctors often leaked stories to Mr Murdoch's papers.

A Downing Street press officer. Tim Allan, has recently joined the Murdoch-owned Sky

Mr Baker continued that the situation was "undermining democratic accountability, undermined by the by-passing of Parliament by leaking stories to the media before Parliament is told ... undermined by the incestuous relationship with Rupert Murdoch."

The MP also questioned the amount of taxes paid by Mr Murdoch's company. News International, which between 1985 and 1995 had paid only £11.74 million tax on profits of almost £ 1 billion. " equivalent to 1.2 pence in the pound", he

"This generosity to an American citizen born in Australia can hardly be helpful to the Treasury. The motivation is clear - it is to keep Mr Murdoch on board and keep his newspapers on side.

"It seems the Prime Minister is very much in bed with Mr Murdoch - a position I don't

Mr Baker went on to accuse the Government of a "cover up"

over Mr Blair's discussion of Mr Murdoch's business interests with Italian Premier Romano

And he also raised concern as to whether Mr Murdoch had undue influence on Government policy on European Monetary Union.

The Liberal Democrat MP ter without Portfolio Peter demanded an annual report on the No 10 press office, a document setting out its role and powers, an end to the leaking of Government announcements and clarification of the relationship between the Prime Minister and Mr Murdoch.

> Mr Baker also attacked the power of Alastair Campbell, an unelected official, and his seeming carte blanche to reprimand ministers. "Is he now the unofficial 23rd cabinet minister?" he asked.

> "Does the Prime Minister endorse unelected officials treating cabinet ministers like naughty schoolchildren who need their pocket money with-

Responding for the Government, junior public service minister Peter Kilfoyle said Mr Baker's charges were "rub-

He continued: "You have talked ... about this incestuous relationship with Mr Rupert Murdoch. I have to say to you that Mr Rupert Murdoch is not treated differently to anybody

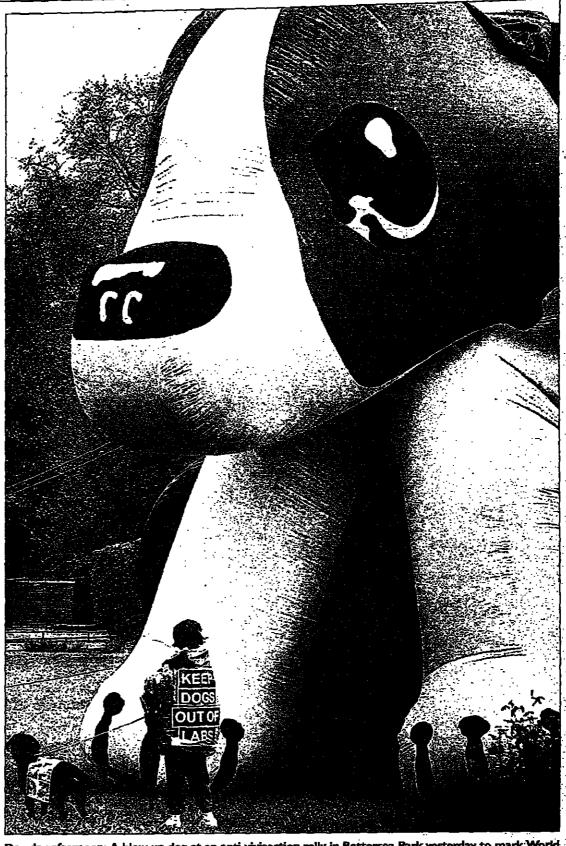
The Italian premier had initiated the call with Mr Blair, not vice-versa, the minister added.

This is the second time in 48 hours that the Government has been criticised over its relationship with Mr Murdoch.

Lord Borrie, the former director general of the Office of Fair Trading earlier rejected Government assertions that no legal changes were needed on the Competition Bill to tackle predatory policing.

The delayed second reading of the Bill will take place in the Commons on May 5.

The Government is expected to win the vote, but ministers are said to be worried by the adverse publicity the debate will create, as well as rebellion from its backbenchers.



Dog day afternoon: A blow-up dog at an anti-vivisection rally in Battersea Park yesterday to mark World Laboratory Animal Day. The event culminated in a minute's remembrance Photograph: Gylnn Griffiths

Editors change at the 'Indy'

ROSIE Boycott yesterday resigned as editor of The Independent and Independent on Sunday to become editor of the Express. titles. Her deputy, Chris Blackhurst, has also left to join her.

Ms Boycott, 46, has left after three months as editor of the daily paper, after receiving "an unbeatable offer" from the Express to produce a "new kind of mid-market newspaper". But she said her departure was also tinged with regret. "It has been the greatest joy of my life to work here."

Brendan Hopkins, managing director of Independent Newspapers (UK), said that following Ms Boycon's departure he had asked Andrew Marr. editor in chief of both Independent titles, to temporarily edit the papers. It is planned that new editors and deputies for both the daily and Sunday papers will be appointed shortly, with Mr. Mart remaining as editor in chief of both titles.

Mr Hopkins said he been bowled over by the number and quality of very senior journalists expressing interest vesterday in joining The Independent. He said: "This gives us a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the editorial side of the paper at a senior level and I look forward to making some exciting announcement shortly."

He said the company remained fully committed to both titles which he predicted had very bright futures. The company was planning expansion and major investment

in the newspapers.

Ms Boycott took over as editor of both The Independent and Independent on Sunday last January after editing the Sunday title since 1996. She made her mark on The Independent with a series of high-profile campaigns, most famously the Sunday paper's demand for the decriminalisation of cannabis. Mr Marr yesterday said he and Ms Boycott had disagreed over the cannabis issue, but dismissed reports that a comment piece commissioned by him last week opposing decriminalisation, had been the reason for her departure.

Voters back PM but find ministers out of touch

By John Rentoul

THE people's verdict on-Labour's first year is that Tony stands their problems, suggest Blair has done well, but that the rest of his government is out of enument's image depends on Mr touch and not especially trust- Blair's personal reputation. worthy, according to a Harris poll for The Independent.

The Prime Minister's personal rating has declided een since the 93 per cent recorded immediately after the election. which is as close as political opinion polls ever get to unanimous. But today's figure of 75 per cent saying he has done a "good job" in the last year remains unprecedented, and is the sort of finding which could easily lead someone, as Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, did this week, to forecast 20 years of Labour government.

But the poll contains many worrying findings for the Government, too. The fact that 46 per cent felt that while Mr Blair understands the problems of ordinary people, "some

WEATHER

of his ministers do not", while a further 27 per cent think that -nebody in government underthe extent to which the Gov-

Independent/Harris Poll

Tony Blair has been Prime

Minister for nearly a year.

Do you think the Govern-

ment has, on balance, been

honest and trustworthy or

Honest and trustworthy 49%

Not honest and trustworthy

A very good job

A fairly good job

A fairly bad job

A very bad job

Would you say he has done?

succeeded in reversifig the traditional class attitudes of British politics. Charges that he has pandered to middle-class Middle England seem to carry some HOW LABOUR SCORES AFTER ONE YEAR

Which of these three state-

Both Mr Blair and his minis-

ters understand the problems

problems of ordinary people

but some his ministers do not

Neither Mr Blair nor his min-

isters understand the prob-

Do you think that public ser-

lems of ordinary people

ments do you most agree

of ordinary people

Mr Blair understand the

Another warning sign is the

extent to which Mr Blair has

weight with working class voters. Among middle-class ABCls, the Printe Minister's "good job" rating touches 80 per cent, while C2DEs, who make up the majority in the electorate, mark him down at 71 per cent.

vices have improved, got

worse or stayed the same

Stayed the same

voted last year?

Conservative

Lib Dem

Other

Got worse

since Labour came to power?

Do you remember how you

(Excluding those who did not

vote, refused, don't know

25%

Working-class voters are more likely than the middle classes to say that ministers are untrustworthy or out of touch. Another paradox is that, despite Mr Blair's "young coun-

try" rhetoric, his support is strongest among old-age pensioners, who also give him an 80 per cent "good job" rating. The poli also reveals one of

the strongest recent examples of political "false memory syndrome", with 56 per cent of the sample claiming to have voted Labour in the general election last year, as against Labour's actual vote of 44 per cent. Only 25 per cent admitted to voting for the Tories, against their actual 31 per cent, and 14 per cent claimed to have voted Liberal Democrat, against 17 per cent.

Harris Research interviewed 1,189 adults between 17 and 21 April. Data were weighted to match the population, but no adjustments were made for people's reluctance to declare their political views.

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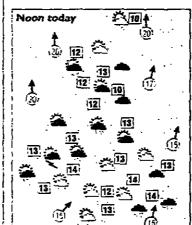
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South-eastern and eastern parts of Scotland and England will star dult and wet with some rather heav rain. That will clear away to leave a better often con with som, roefs and just the odd shower. Elsewhere there will be summy spells throughout the day but scattered showers will also break out. Some of the showers will be fearly with the worst of them over western Scotland and Northern heland, where they will merge into longer Services of rein with thursdenstoning possible

Outlook for the next few days

it will stay is pealed tomorrow and into Monday with a more! constructed is and chargers. The best of any Surshing will be in the east, with the most featurent Showers in western and north-western areas, especially forthern fieland and wastern Scotland. Showers will the acting on Tuesday but more rain will move across evernight. Many places will be wet on Wednesday but Sociland and Northern beland will be more showery

British Isles weather C cloudy, Cl.Clear, Flarr, Fg.log, Hz.haze, M. most, R.rokn F 7457 Guerasay Aberdeen Interness Anglesay F 1457 Isles of Scilly F 1457 Jerser

11%

64%

12%

Belfast Birmingham C (45? Liverpool Bournemonth & 1254 Manchester C 1355 Bawcastle R 1254 Searborousb Southampton (# 1254 Ediaborgh Southend Ezeter Storneway Slaspew Yark Air quality

S England Water C England N England Scotland N Ireland Moderati Good Good Good Good Good

INDEPENDENT Weatherline

High tides Liverpool Avormouth Hull (Albert Dock) 9.7 13.5 86 34 43

Sun & moon

Lighting-up times

2046 to 557 20.23 to 547 20.23 to 553 20.43 to 545 20.14 to 545 20.26 to 545 20.24 to 540 20.24 to 540 Out and about with AA Roadwatch Curl 0336 401777 for the Latest local and national traffic rests Source The Automobile Association. Calls charged at 50p per min at all times (inc. y4T). Moon sets 18.54

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Why life in 2020 may be short on joy

Economics Editor

TWO-HOUR space-shuttle flights to Sydney or San Francisco, a 25-hour working week, one in five fathers staying at home as house-husbands; 350mph trains for commuting to work, and automatic lawn mowing - just a few of the delights in store by the year 2020,

The chances are that within next two decades Britons. be a lot healthier and wealthier, with more leisure and more technological goodies, according to a new report published today. It will be a world of economic opportunity - for those on the right side of the fence.

In its assessment of the future, the Henley Centre puts the odds on an economic and social crisis at just one in five.

And if that happens, it will be due to an unforeseen global event such as an earthquake in Japan or crash in world stock.

So let's bask in its glowing vision of prosperity.

For example, in the world of work, the report predicts less

Superconductive magnetic levitation trains will zoom into the cities, cutting travel times. "The longest commuter journey will be just under two hours, mainly for the very wealthy using the space shuttle."

Most people will work fewer than 25 hours each week over three or four days, spending their free days involved in community work. This will expand as people take on many welfare roles previously filled by the state, says author Graeme-

With a desktop computer in 2020 "as powerful as all the. supputers in Silicon Valley today" we will shop on-line, get of work, it speculates, in the new our entertainment on-line, and even find romance ou-line. For, apparently, this is the way many couples will meet.

That must be partly because the Henley Centre is predicting the demise of the office. A tenth of the biggest companies will be entirely "virtual", with no physical HQ, and a quarter of all workers will operate from bome.



flexible world of work, with more self-employment and job hopping. We might spend as much as a month every year out world of "friction-free capital-

even more attractive. Falling land prices and a relaxation of green-belt legislation will cut the cost of building an idyllic suburban retreat. Young people will live in the cities but will move

out when they start a family. Technology in the home will

housework, with robots that sions too. vacuum the carpet automatically and intelligent house management systems - nice for the growing army of husbands in

To cap it all, we will live Luckily, home is going to be longer, thanks to gene therapy. and be healthier as a result of preventative medicine.

Unfortunately, we will not be any happier, the report reckons. Rather, there will be a growing "crisis of unmet expectations" triggered by the vast array of new products and services avail-

have reduced the burden of able. There will be social ten-

The welfare state will retreat further, and Britain could see the spread of US-style "gated communities" that keep out the dangerous riff-raff. And, as the report concedes,

there is a small chance of a much bleaker future. Unemployment could re-

turn to 1930s rates and conflict increasing." between the haves and have nots escalate.

Spending and employment would plummet in a "hellish

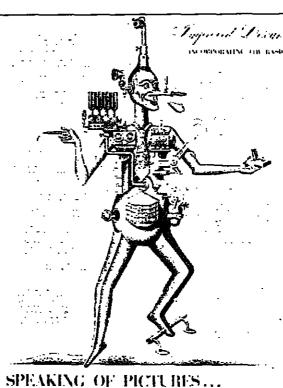
Not surprisingly for a report sponsored by Barclays Life, it offers one solution. We could all put a lot more

effort into saving for hard times. Nigel Waite, marketing director, draws his own conclusion from the report: "The need for people to make their own financial provisions for retirement and the future is ever

■ 2020 Vision, £300 from Barclays Life, with all proceeds to Marie Curie Cancer Care, 0171 489 1995 ea 3911.



Some of the more peculiar ways in which the visionaries of earlier in the century saw our future after 2000 Photographs: Advertising Archives



Police sacrifice rugby to duty

By Andrew Buncombe

ONE CAN only imagine how hard they trained, week in. week out, throughout the long. damp South Wales winter.

But the South Wales Police Rugby Union team are made up of committed men who all strove to make their team the best. And this week their efforts seemed to have been rewarded when they were due to play in the prestigious Police Athletic Association rugby cup final.

But having reached the national final, the team were forced to pull out after their chief constable refused to let enough of them have time off

"It's all very embarrassing really. I think there is a certain amount of egg on the face," said one anonymous police source.

The team had been due to play the final against Lancashire Police last Wednesday at Coventry. But at a training session the night before, it became obvious that not enough players would be able to get time off. Rather than take a weakened squad, the team pulled out.

"Of course it is disappointing. We were very much looking forward to the match and the team had worked very hard," said Inspector Mike Lerway, the team manager "But we are police officers and we realise that our first duty has to be to our community and we support our chief constable on that."

In the past, South Wales officers had been given time off to play sport. But there has been pressure in recent years from the force's authority to stop this. In a statement, chief constable Tony Burden said: "Although it is regrettable that the officers were not available to play in the PAA cup final, it should be remembered that their priority is to police the community of South Wales."

The team's chance now lies with the PAA who will consider an appeal to have the game rearranged. As it happens. Mr Burden is the PAA's secretary.

A Hollywood favourite forced to test-drive her principles

NEWS

WHOOPI **GOLDBERG**

WHOOPI Goldberg is fearsome when it comes to breaking wind and she's not afraid to admit it. writes Clare Garner. Indeed. she's "a great believer in claiming farts" and has even thought about bottling and marketing hers as Essence of Whoopi. Breaking wind is the subject

of one of the 24 monologues in Ms Goldberg's new book, entitled simply Book, published this week. Under the chapter hearing "Wind", the woman how she came to be Whoopi. When I was in my twenties

and diagnosed with ulcers, I was Whoopi," she divalges. "I was like a walking whoopee cushion, they said. And the name lingers, violet scent has dissipated."

fusion about her name, but only in 1984, when Mike in Hollywood, where prints of what about her age? Her correct Nichols, director of The Grad- her hands, feet and braids are there preserving my daughter's birthdate is 1955, making her 42. uate and Working Girl, spotted preserved in concrete. In 1992 right not to have an abortion.



how she became 'Whoop?'

a young actress starting out, Ms Goldberg lied about her age, encouraged to fast up a storm, adding six years because "noand my friends started calling me body would hire me to act. Everyone said I was too young.

Back then, Goldberg was a single mother living on benefit like a good fart, long after my in California. She took temporary jobs but was always doing So, that clears up any con- some acting on the side. It was

Photograph: Andrew Buurman born Caren Johnson explains but The Fibn Encylopedia says her one-woman show and ofshe is 48. The reason is that as fered to launch her on the Broadway stage, that Whoopi

the resultant show and decided

Now she commands £6m a movie and has an Oscar (for her performance in Ghost), a Grammy and two Golden Globe drive her principles: "I realised Awards, plus a place of honour at Grauman's Chinese Theatre

buster comedy. Sister Act, which grossed more than \$300m. She hates eggs, men in the bathroom, flying and being

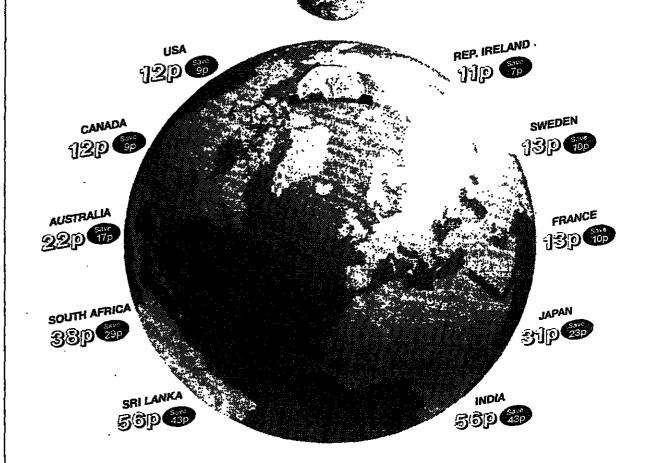
she starred in the surprise block-

called an African American. "Call me an asshole, call me a blowhard, but don't call me an African American, Please," she implores in the "Race" chapter. It divides us, as a nation and as a people, and it kinda pisses me off. It diminishes everything I've accomplished and everything every other black person has accomplished on American soil."

Goldberg takes honesty seriously. So seriously that when she wed for the third time - to Lyle Trachtenberg, a trade union organiser, in 1994 - her marriage vow was "Maybe", rather than "I do." The marriage lasted one year.

At 19, Goldberg had a daughter, Alexandra, who in turn had a child. Amarah, at 15. took off. Steven Spielberg saw In her book, Goldberg recalls how a 14-year-old Alexandra to cast her in The Color Purple. telephoned to say: "Mom, I'm pregnant." followed by "Mom? I want to keep this baby." Goldberg was forced to testthat if I was out there screaming to preserve a woman's right to an abortion, I was also out

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April storms set new rainfall record

driest/ hottest weather records spokesman said they were conto be set in the UK, the Easter fident that rain which fell in storms are due to make this many parts of the country yesmonth the wettest April of the terday would break the record. Stephen Davenport, a senior £500 million. Just days after scientists an- forecaster, said: "There is no

nounced that the world is hot-doubt it has been an abnormally ter than it has been at any time wet month." The all-time record is held in the past 600 years, weather forecasters are preparing to reby April 1782, when there were
Surrey Water yesterday anno Arecord rainfall.

5.4 inches of rain - and it is not nounced the lifting of a sprinkler

Yesterday, the figures col- beyond possibility that this record will be broken.

more than five inches set in Midlands, West Country and Wales over Easter caused chaos, other bizarre weather condi-IN THE latest of the rainiest/ And a Meteorological Office cost four lives and millions of pounds of damage.

> of the flooding, which also left perature of 19.6 recorded at hundreds homeless, could reach

have proved a boon for garden- clear away from most places to ers in Surrey. Sutton and East leave sunny spells and a few ban after an inspection showed land will develop showers after water levels had returned to nor- a dry, bright start. There is a risk The floods which hit the mal after a two-year drought.

The year has already seen tions. On 13 February, Britain had its hottest February day Insurers have said the cost since records began with a tem-Barbourne in Worcestershire.

Today, much of England and However, every cloud has its Wales will have outbreaks of silver lining. The downpours rain, some heavy, but it should showers.

Scotland and Northern Ire-

No 10 denies Trimble call halted report

Chief Palitical Correspondent

TONY Blair's office denied vesterday that a call from David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, to 10 Downing Street led to the Prime Minister's intervention and the postponement of a contentious Parades Commission report on

Orange marches. The resignation of two members immediately after the commission's agreement to hold back the report plunged it into crisis and threatened to undermine the success of the "yes" campaign for the referendum on the peace settlement on 22 May.

Mr Trimble, who is facing a growing challenge as Ulster Unionist leader to his support for the "yes" campaign, said he was angry at reports that the commission was planning to

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lovalist march in Drumeree, in his own constituency.

Confirming Mr Trimble's call had been made, the Prime Minister's spokesman said that it had taken place after Mr Blair had already asked the commission chairman, Alastair Graham, to halt the publication of the report over fears that it would undermine Unionist and lovalist support for a "yes" vote in the referendum.

Mr Trimble confirmed contacting a Labour backbench MP about his anger over the report, but Downing Street could not comment on claims that the MP was a close aide to the Prime Minister. Mr Trimble, who was in

America, denied speaking directly to Mr Blair before the decision to halt the report was

Mr Trimble said he had

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announce its intention ban the made representations to Mr early release of terrorist pris-Graham "in the strongest terms" that it would be "lunatic, absolute folly" to ban the

Drumeree Orange parade. "We have got to have as normal a summer as possible, for the Drumeree church service to go ahead would be a sign of normality. For it to be interrupted would plunge this province back into conflict." Mr Trimble

Downing Street said Mr Blair did not believe the resignation of two members from the commission had wrecked its credibility. Mr Blair is confident that it will replace the two members and carry out its task in verting marches after the referendum result is known.

William Hague, the Conservative leader, reinforced his support for the peace settlement yesterday in the face of a growing Tory revolt over the

oners as part of the package. He faced fresh criticism from

Lord Tebbit, following the attack by the former prime minister, Baroness Thatcher, on plans to release terrorists who had targeted the Tory cabinet. Some Tory MPs also warned that they will vote against the special Bill to allow the prisoners to be freed on licence when it comes before the Commons. Mr Hague acknowledged

on BBC radio that some people - including former Lady Thatcher - were "extremely anxious" about the proposals to free paramilitaries who have bombed and murdered. But there could be no over-

all settlement plan without agreement on the issue of the risoners, he said. "This is a historic opportu-

nity to bring peace to Northern Ireland," Mr Hague said.



Bishop rails at 'wreckers' of Ulster deal

Gerard Clifford, the Bishop strained to find a solution to the problems of Northern Ireland that would be acceptable to us here are some, the men and women of violence, who feel threatened by the prospect of peace. They feel so threatened they are willing to kill and murder to ensure that peace never comes."

He continued: "I have no doubt that the murder of Adrian Lamph was clinically and viciously executed to ensure that Portadown would rebel at the prospect of peace."

Parish priest Father Sean Larkin told hundreds of mourners at St John the Baptist Church: "For ever indelibly

imprinted on my mind is the memory of walking down the long hospital corridors to the intensive care unit where Adrian lay dying and seeing a trail of his lifeblood along the corridorfloor." The priest paid tribute to Mr Lamph, a council employee, as a likeable, hardworking young man. His girlfriend, Nichola McKee, with whom he had a two-year-old son, and his father, Tommy, led

the procession of mourners. Police are still investigating Mr Lamph's murder; it is believed the hardline Loyalist Volunteer Force was behind the

Police yesterday pledged to track down those responsible for the attack on the elderly man. A gang forced their way into his home at Alamein House in the nationalist New Lodge area of north Belfast and shot him in both knees and both ankles. The victim was also beaten about the head.

Detectives said they were puzzled by the attack because of the victim's age, but said it all. The vast majority believe bore all the hallmarks of a that can still be achieved but paramilitary punishment shooting. They called it "a sickening_ attack on a weak and defenceless pensioner".

RUC Chief Inspector Mervyn Patton said: "It was nothing short of torture and the thugs who brutalised him must be caught. The pensioner was described as being in a stable condition.

The incident was one of two "kneecappings" on Thursday night. A 20-year-old man was also shot in both legs during an attack on the national-

ist Twinbrook estate in west



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lan Tordoff: Awaiting sentence for electricity theft

Scrap dealer stole electricity to power his home

A SCRAP dealer used thousands of pounds worth of stolen electricity to ower an outhouse, workshop, colour televisions, a dishwasher, a nicrowave, a fridge-freezer and a hifi by illegally hooking up to a lamppost, a court heard yesterday.

Ian Tordoff led a cable from his house to a specially constructed joint at the base of the lamppost where he could connect up his supply when he wished.

Leeds Crown Court heard yesterday that Tordoff, 44, was only caught after police could not understand why his kitchen lights remained on after being shown that his generator – which be claimed powered his home – was switched off.

After a four day trial Tordoff, from Stanley, near Wakefield, West Yorkshire, was found guilty of the illegal use of electricity between June 1996 and March 1997. He was also found guilty of damaging property belonging to Yorkshire Electricity. He jed the charges.

Tordoff, whose wife and teenage

son were in court, was released on bail to await sentencing. Assistant Recorder Jennifer Kershaw QC said the adjournment was no indication of what sentence she would give. Peter Robertshaw, Tordoff's solicitor, said they were considering appealing against the verdict.

After the case Yorkshire Electricity said anyone tampering with such equipment was risking their

Kevin Miles, the company's customer services director, said: "People who steal electricity don't just run the risk of being caught but also of killing someone else.

"Every year people are burned. scarred and even temporarily blinded after tampering with our equip-

He said the company's meter reading teams were trained to spot

'We also monitor people's bills and consumption and can often easily identify when people are cheating," he added. "This crime is like shoplifting - it's the honest customers who end up paying for it."



An outbuilding Tordoff powered with electricity stolen via a cable from a streetlamp

'Uranium reaches Dounreay

Science and Technology Editor

A CONSIGNMENT of uranium from the former Soviet Reublic of Georgia arrived safely at the Dounreay nuclear plant in Scotland vesterday, but triggered off a storm of political and environmental argument which refused to abate.

The shipment arrived at RAF Kinloss early yesterday morning in two United States Galaxy air freighters, and was driven to Dounreay 100 miles away in a four-hour journey. In a Commons written reply, Forcign Office minister Doug Henderson told MPs that the 3kg of irradiated reactor fuel has said. We are prepared to do now arrived safely at Domireay our bit under the non-proliferwhere it is being handled by the UK Atomic Energy Authority". Further information on the decision to accept the material stead attacked SNP leader Alex would be given in the Commons Salmond, with Scottish indus-

But environmental campaigners said that they were Insidering launching a legal hid to try to have the reprocessing stopped, and the Scottish National Party accused the government of showing "bad." faith" lowards Scotland.

The SNP's environment spokeswoman, Roseanna Cun-sponsible for a dangerous and ningham, insisted that the Gov- cynical falsehood which I call on ernment's stated plan to turn the material into medical isotopes was "a made-up story" to disguise its motive. She suggested that the tually produce "some five deal might have been struck by Prime Minister Tony Blair with President Bill Clinton for some other reason - or else that it was done to set a precedent opening age of the medical isotopes.

the door to restart commercial reprocessing at Dounreay.

Insisting that there was no shortage of medical isotopes, she said: "What are the reasons why it is being brought? We need to enquire far more closely how this deal was done. "They have driven a coach and horses through the regulatory set-up governing Dounreay. Having done it once, I do not see why they would not use it as a precedent to do it again. Is this an attempt to restart Dounteay as a commer-'cial reprocessing plant?"

But the Secretary of State for Scotland, Donald Dewar, told BBC Radio Scotland he was happy for the uranium to be dealt with at the plant. He ation treaty and be a good citizen in world terms."

But the Government innext week, Mr Henderson said: try minister Brian Wilson insisting that the nuclear material would benefit medicine, and demanding that Mr Salmond should repudiate quotes attributed to him which accused ministers of lying

"If however you stand by them [attributed quotes], then I must tell you that you are reyou to withdraw," Mr Wilson wrote. He said that the material from Georgia would evenmillion treatment doses, for the benefit of cancer sufferers and the the second crucial fact" was that there was a short-

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Magnet strikers to accept pay-off

By Barrie Clement

BRITAIN'S longest marring and arguably most theatrical incustrial dispute ended yesterday when workers at the Magnet." kitchen company voted narrow ly to accept an £850,000 pay-off:

The conflict, which took place in Darlington next door to the the strikers who originally Prime Minister's constituency. was resolved when strikers voted by 47 to 34 to accept an avcrage £8,500 severance payment.

At one stage or another the dispute involved an "eco-camp", the establishment of a chicken farm and a replica of Del Boy's three wheeler van from television's Only Fools and Horses.

Former miners from Derhyshire expressed support for the dismissed workers bydemonstrating ourside the Cambridgeshire mansion of Alan Bowkett, chairman of the Beris-

forti group, which owns Magnet. : An injunction was sought gainst the eco-camp on the grounds that it formed an unlawful picket line around Mr Bowkert's home. The ex-primen

then took over a nearby field and set up what they described as a chicken farm.

The three-wheeler van, used to portray the alleged "spivvy nature of the company, haunted Magnet Kitchens' shops and numerous company meetings. - The street theatre, however,

failed to win reinstatement for walked out for a week over pay in 1996, were subsequently sacked and have picketed the Darlington plant ever since.

Embairassed by the increasingly high profile dispute near his constituency home, Tony Blair ended his "hands-off" approach in the Commons recently when he urged both sides to settle the matter with the help of conciliation service Acas.

The GMB general union, the Transport and General Workers' Union and construction union Ucatt balloted members under the threat that the severance offer would be withdrawn at the end of the month. A relieved David Williams, managing director of Magnet, welcomed the result of the ballot.

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Source: Taylor Nelson AGB Business Line - October 1997

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By Anthony Bevins Political Editor

THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

LABOUR has so refined its management techniques that it has even circulated ministers as well as MPs with a "script" for follow-up calls to people who have only been members of the party for a year, and whose election-time membership now needs renewal.

Designed for apparent simpletons, the "script" starts off by asking MPs: "Who are we calling?" It replies: "Members at the end of their first year of Labour Party membership, who are due to renew for the first time.

The great majority of your calls should be positive, however, depending on what the issues of the day are, this may not always be an easy call to make. But it is always worth doing - the very fact that an MP is calling a member at the end of their first year

of membership will send very strong signals of worth, recognition, and involvement and should result in the member renewing their membership."

According to the "script". the purpose of the call is "To find out how the member views their first year of membership; to listen to what they have to say about the Labour government and its policies; to encourage them to renew their membership."

The script starts: "Hello. I'm your Member of Parliament here in . I'm calling because I

see that you have been a Labour Party member for almost a year and I just wanted to make contact with you at this important time. How have you viewed your

membership so far? (listen to answer and respond.) Are there

any local issues you think I should be dealing with? (Listen and respond).) Are there any national issues you feel

strongly about (Listen and re-At that point, MPs are told to ask about membership renewal, saying: "I do hope that

you will be able to renew your "If YES: That's great, , I'm really pleased. You will be getting a letter from the

party in the near future. "If NO: Why not?" The MPs are told that if there is a political objection, they should turn the page and read from the "objection responses".

Under that heading, if the disaffected party member says: "I disagree with the Labour pol-", the MP is told to say: "Fair enough. But there are very few members of the party who agree with every

single point of policy; that's way the Labour Party is so strong because there is constant discussion of all areas over the whole party, and everyone's view is listened to.

"You may disagree with the but I'm sure policy on that overall, you still support the overall aims and objectives of

the Labour government." If the member then says: "What's the point? You're just the same as the Tories", the MP is told to say: "No, we're not.

The Tories showed again and again that they were only interested in themselves. Decisions they made about the country were determined by bow much it benefited themselves and their friends - you only need to look at all the examples of government sleaze that were discovered over the last two years of their government to see that in action ..."

All faiths welcome in Lords, says Carey

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THE ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury. Dr George Carey, said today he would welcome the creation of peers representing other faiths as part of the reform of the House of Lords.

But he signalled that any moves by the Government to cut the 26 seats reserved for Church of England bishops would be firmly resisted.

Dr Carey issued a statement after a newspaper report that he and the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, had discussed moves to reduce the number of bishops in the Lords to make room for representatives of other faiths.

The idea comes as the Govern ernment considers ways to reform membership of the Lords after the abolition of the right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the Upper House. Currently, although some

non-Anglicans sit in the Lords, they are not there on behalf of their religions. The Government believes that members of aan Catholic, Methodis Jewish, Muslim and Hindu faiths should also be allotted seats. The Cabinet Office said that

cutting the number of bishops to make way for representatives of other faiths was a "possible idea", but said it was not yet on the agenda of the committee dealing with Lords reform. "The committee hasn't even

begun to think about this yet. It's not even been talked about. It's a possible idea but there are no proposals to do this yet," a spokesman said. Lambeth Palace confirmed

that Dr Carey had a private lunch with the Lord Chancellor in February at which "a number of different topics were discussed informally". The Lord Chancellor's Department also confirmed that Lord Irvine had met the Archbishop, but said it was a private meeting and a wide range of issues had been discussed.

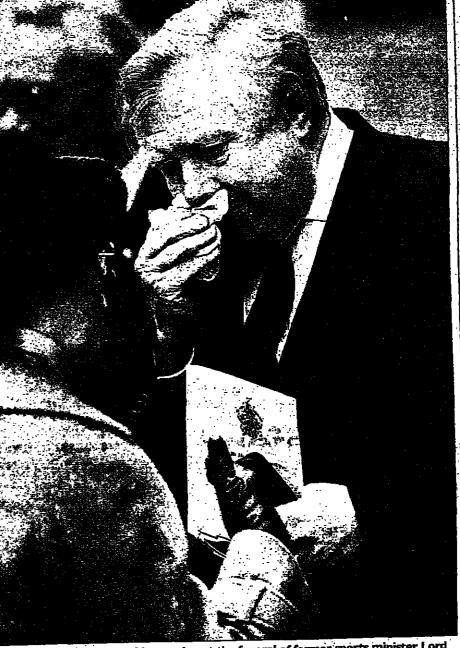
In its statement today, Lambeth Palace made clear Dr Carev would welcome the creation of more peers of other faiths, but gave a clear hint that he opposed reducing the number of Church of England bishops.
"The Archbishop does not

see any necessary link between Facing a barrage of criticism the number of Church of England Bishops in the House of Lords and numbers of peers of other church and faith affiliations. The Church has long made it clear it would welcome the creation of more such peers. "The Archbishop looks for-

ward to further constructive discussions about these and other matters as the shape of proposals about the overall size, nature and composition of a reformed Upper House becomes clearer." Lambeth Palace said.

Viscount Cranborne, Tory leader in the Lords, seized on these latest claims about reform of the Upper House to attack the Government.

"This is a piecemeal approach by this Government towards the reform of the House of Lords," he said.



Lord Hattersley showing his emotion at the funeral of former sports minister Lord Denis Howell at St Paul's Church in Birmingham yesterday

Party under fire on briefing notes plan

Chief Political Correspondent

LABOUR leaders were pressing on yesterday with a "brazen" attempt to get taxpayers' money to pay for MPs' briefing notes from the Labour

Tory leaders called for a Commons inquiry into the disclosure yesterday by the Independent that MPs were being asked to arrange with the Commons fees office for payments of £400 a year to be paid direct to a Labour bank account for the party briefing service.

over the alleged "fiddle". Labour leaders continued vesterday to seek the approval of the fees office for the payments. The Independent learned that Nick Brown, the Labour Chief Whip, contacted the fees office yesterday as Labour faced a storm of criticism to seek a way around the objections to the payments by

the fees office. But last night the fees office confirmed that it was writing to Mr Brown ruling out the payments, which are intended for necessary constituency al-

lowances and office costs. Hilary Armstrong, the minister for local government, had indicated earlier that the party was refusing to give up the plan: "This is commercially

available material which is on the open market and isn't

specifically for Labour MPs. "Any MP is able to make sure they get the information that is necessary about what's going on in this country and beyond this country to make sure

they have got the appropriate

Armstrong: Indicated the

party was standing firm

information for their job," she But a Tory spokesman said: "It's laughable to suggest that this isn't party political. Of course it is. It is a brazen attempt to fund the service at the

taxpayers' expense." A source in the fees office said it had rejected the claims that it was a commercial service of use to all MPs including Tories. "We have seen a publication from the Labour Party

"If the Tories bought it, they would want to make holes in it rather than use it, which would defeat the object of the exer-The Inland Revenue, which, could be asked to refund the

Hague defi

Dorre qui

payments, had also indicated that it would not comply with: the scheme, if it was not necessary for all MPs to claim it. Tom Sawyer, general secretary of the party, wrote to Labour MPs at the start of this

Labour MPs with a 24-hour me dia monitoring service Gillian Shephard, Tory spokeswoman on House of Commons affairs, said she would write to both Commons. Speaker Betty Boothroyd and Leader of the Commons Ann. Taylor calling for an investigation. She would also raise the

month offering to provide all

matter in the House. "It's no surprise that Labout MPs need such a service, as they cannot carry out even the most basic tasks without being told what to do by Mr Blair.

"But taxpayers should not be" made to pay for a service they. wouldn't want if it was being give en away." she said.

The fees office spokesman said Labour MPs would not be reimbursed if they claimed expenses for the media monitoring service: "No way. Jose," he



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Cript Prescott lorries in green plan

Transport Correspondent

JOHN Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, yesterday announced a new deal which will cut 1,000 lorry journeys a year on a busy roads as part of the Government's plans to reduce traffic levels.

The scheme, a smaller version of a nationwide plan which has yet to receive public subsidy, will see three train trips a day made between Liverpool and

Lorry containers will be placed instead on specially converted freight wagons. The unveiled at a special locomotive

naming ceremony in Chester. Mr Prescott, who was acsaid rail freight was "experi-

"This new contract, starting in June, is for the carriage of purpose-built road tankers between Liverpool and Tilbury using "piggyback" wagons and is excellent news for the railways and the environment," he said.

Mr Prescott said the move was particularly relevant as European ministers will this weekand discuss the role of railways message to Cabinet colleagues n reducing traffic congestion. Mr Kinnock also warned of a tile for billions of pounds worth "crisis of congestion" adding that asthma levels were among the highest in Europe.

comed the move, but emphasised the actual number of journeys being shifted to the Treasury, Alistair Darling, is enrailways would be very small. It gaged in an exhaustive round of is a good sign, got the actual? blatestis over the details. lague defends

told William Hague he wants to

The Conservative education

beavy criticism for his lack-lus-

tre performance in Opposition.

But he has told the Tory leader

that he has not been able to de-

have liked to his brief, and has

been trying to spend more time

with his young family. He will

sland down from the front

bench when Mr Hague reshuf-

Qcs his Shadow Cabinet. "It is

Ann Widdecome: tipped

micable. It's not about Europe," said one of his friends.

Another source said: "He's

his family. He was disappoint-

ed after the leadership, and

maybe it was a mistake carry-

ing on but he did so out of duty

to the party. Now he thinks it's

Mr Dorrell, who also has a

family clothing company, was

disappointed at failing to gain

sufficient support to mount a

full challenge for the Tory par-

ty leadership against Mr Hague

after John Major stood down.

M former health secretary in the

Major government, Mr Dor-

rell's decision to leave the front

bench brings to an end a po-

time to step down.

for promotion.

with his family.

Tory team as

Dorrell quits

STEPHEN DORRELL has "one nation" Tory tradition.

stand down from the Shadow help Mr Hague's attempt to bol-Cabinet to spend more time ster his party's standing amid

spokesman has been the butt of colleagues are expecting a

vote as much time as he would the fire and brimstone former

number of journeys is very small," said a spokesman for the reight fransport Association.

Experts say the key to shifting lorty loads from road to rail is to upgrade the main rail freight route between the Channel Tunnel northwards to Scotland.

Railtrack, the company that owns the nation's stations and infrastructure, believes its £235m plan for the route could remove 400,000 lorry journeys off the roads.

■ Mr Prescott yesterday warned Labour supporters not to expect spending restraint to be thrown away when the parcommercial agreement be- ty's old campaigner gave his tween two companies - Freight- own endorsement of new liner and Tankfreight - was Labour's first year in office, writes Colin Brown.

Promising more "hard work" than celebrations for companied by EU Transport the first anniversary on 1 May Commissioner Neil Kinnock of Labour's election landslide, Mr Prescott told a campaign encing a revival in this country". meeting in Chester that the key government event of the summer would be the White Paper on government spending.

But he said: "Gone are the days of assuming that money is the answer to every problem. There are many imaginative ways of making better use of the resources we have."

That was seen as a clear who are fighting a last ditch batof extra spending for their department budgets to accept restraint before final agreement The freight industry wel- is reached on the comprehensive spending review.

The Chief Secretary to the

of the young moderates in the

The resignation did little to

claims that his Shadow Cabinet

was full of "shadows". His close

reshuffle to beef up the per-

tion include Ann Widdecombe.

home office minister; who sav-

aged Michael Howard's

chances of winning the leader-

ship; David Willetts, an intel-

lectual heavyweight behind the

leadership; and Liam Fox, a GP

Mr Hague yesterday gave a

clear hint that he was poised to sack some of his team. The Tory leader said: "It is important to bring on new talent and I am pleased to say there is a lot of new talent in the party." Mr Hague told a local government election campaign

conference that under his leadership, the party was going to "stop arguing and start canvassing". But at Westminster, there has been growing criticism

that his Shadow Cabinet has

failed to get to grips with its role

The criticism spread to Mr

Good Friday Ulster peace set-

wing social security shadow to

Harriet Harman.

his wife to Namibia.

Labour. -

told William [Hague] that he Hague when he allowed An-

and former whip

Those tipped for promo-

formance of the Opposition.



7/NEWS

Buffer zone: Crewe station. Officials denied its shabbiness was the reason for going by road

Crewe defended after ministers switch to cars

By Michael McCarthy Environment Correspondent

GOVERNMENT efforts at greening the transport sector ran into congestion yesterday when it laid on 50 motor vehicles to take European ministers to a conference on transport and the environment.

On the day that a private member's Bill on traffic reduction went through the Commons with government support, 30 saloons - "they're not limousines," a Government spokesman insisted were sent with 20 people-carriers to ferry EU transport and environment ministers from Manchester airport to their meeting at Chester.

Environmental groups said they could have gone by train. "Lining up 50 vehicles at an airport is sending a very strong signal that they're not serious, said Tony Juniper, campaigns director of Friends of the Earth.

The EU ministers are attending the first joint environ-

ment-transport council meeting this weekend, hosted in his home city by the Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, who this morning opens Europe's largest green-vehicle show, a display of alternatively powered cars. There was nothing alternative, however, about the cars which took the ministers the 35 miles from the airport to their hotels. They were a fleet of Ford Granada Scorpios, Vauxhall Omegas and Rover 800s, the first two of which, according to the AA, will be unlikely to reach 30mpg in petrol con-

sumption. The Government denied a report that it had rejected the rail option because of the shabbiness of Crewe station, where the ministers would have had to change. "It's nothing to do with Crewe, it's simple logistics," a spokesman said. "All of these ministers could fly direct to Manchester, except for the people from Athens. They want to be collected and taken to



fire on s plan

By Andrew Buncombe

A BUSINESSWOMAN who claimed that her Japanese boss. likehed her to Marilyn Monroe and described British women as fat pigs yesterday withdrewher allegation of racial and sexual

Following a confidential settlement under which Lisa-Jane Station is believed to receive an undisclosed sum of money, she withdrew her allegation that Mac Okamoto had threatened to sack her. Part of the allega- ton's solicitor Ian Hartley read Okamoto, head of the London offices of Shirayama Shokosan, which owns County Hall, had made obseene remarks about Diana, Princess of Wales, Ms Station, 37, former general manager of the London Aquarium, had tolu an industrial tribunal that Mr Okamoto had threatened to sack her if she invited the

princess and her sons to open the aquarium in March 1997.

She told the tribunal in Croydon, south London, that he had told her: "I do not want that bloody ... big-nosed princess to open the aquarium. I do not want any royals at the aquarium."

Ms Statton, an Anglo-American, had also claimed that her boss had made repeated advances towards her, inviting her out for dinner and asking questions about her private life. Outside the tribunal, Ms Stat-

non-centred on a claim that Mr., a statement on behalf of both parties. He said: "All allegations of sexual and racial discrimination have been withdrawn as the parties have resolved their difterences amicably.

Ms Statton said: "I am very happy with the way things have gone." But Mr Okamoto appeared less convinced. He left the tribunal holding up a

hide his face from the press photographers. As he left he denied having made derogatory remarks about British women.

During the tribunal Ms Statton had said she believed Mr Okamoto had made the derogatory comments about British women in order to insult her personally, "He said British women are fat and have legs like tree trunks," she said. "It was very derogatory." She also claimed that he had made anti-Semitic remarks and had called former Home Secretary Michael Howard, who was her cousin's father-in-law, a "bloody

Ms Statton was demoted from general manager of the aquarium to sales and marketing manager and eventually dismissed on 3 November 1997 after she had complained of sexual and racial discrimination.

stupid Jew".



Walking tall: Gerry Green and Lauren Elvy, 2, demonstrating the baby walker he made for her from a shopping trolley. Asda yesterday gave 10 more trollies to be converted for children with mobility difficulties Photograph: Philip Meech

of a lever in questioning Dob-Dobson and Norris were two of the five youths arrested over the racist murder of

Murder

ignored

A DETECTIVE who questioned one of the vouths sespected of murdering Stephen Lawrence had not been shown a photograph proving he was an

associate of another suspect, the

public inquiry into Stephen's

death heard yesterday, writes

Former detective constable:

John Davidson said Gary Dob-

ris, who came from a criminal

family on an estate in Flumn.

team had photographed the

who recently retired, said: "F

would ... have given me more

them was ever convicted.

Told that a surveillance

south-east London:

Kathy Marks.

case clue

A BABY, whose death led to the arrest of a 31-year-old woman and an 11-year-old boy, died from head injuries, a post-mortem examination revealed. The eight-month-old boy was taken to

chine but was pronounced dead two days later. The mother

Teletubbies toast of BBC

THE Teletubbies have won BBC Worldwide the top prize of New Product of the Year at the 1998 Marketing Society Awards. BBC Worldwide was praised for developing a set of brand values to which all Teletubbies products could adhere and which "could be realistically converted into products". Jeff Taylor, director of global brand development, said: "The award demonstrates how it is possible to take a programme that meets all the artistic and editorial requirements of the BBC and market it in such a way that we retain all [our] core values."

Whistleblower Bill success

VEGETARIAN schoolchildren are not being given adequate 53 per cent believed fish was a suitable product for a vegetarian meal and many believed chicken and other white meat

Baby 'died of head injuries'

St George's Hospital in south London, on Monday. Scotland Yard said the child was put on a life-support ma-

of the baby boy, who has not been named, was at work when he was taken to hospital. She had left her son in the morning with a babysitter. The arrested woman and the boy, thought to be her son, were questioned and released on bail.

A BILL to protect whistleblowers who make disclosures of information in the public interest cleared the Commons yesterday. The Public Interest Disclosure Bill gained an unopposed third reading and now goes to the Lords with a strong chance of becoming law. The Bill, piloted by Tory MP Richard Shepherd (Aldridge-Brownhills) with cross-party support, would allow whistleblowers to bring actions if victimised.

Schools 'fail veggie pupils'

meals at school, the Vegetarian Society warned yesterday. A survey of school caterers revealed more than 60 per cent could not accurately define what being vegetarian meant: were appropriate.

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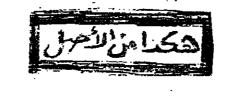
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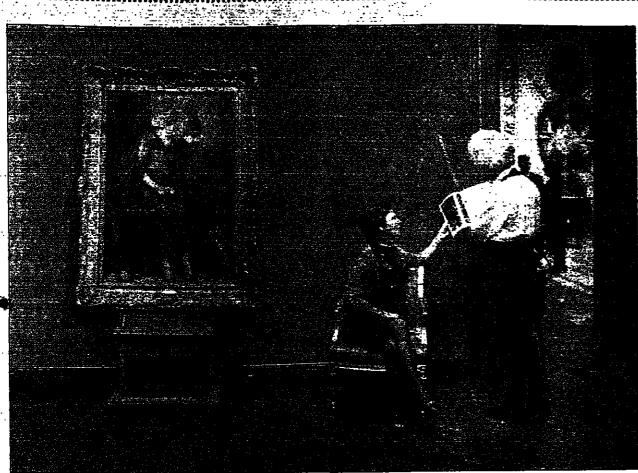
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Cat's tale Two salesroom assistants look through a catalogue at Chrities in London as Frederick, Lord Leighton's

Space probe finds suggestion of life on Jupiter's second moon

By Michael Hanlon

ORGANIC chemicals have been discovered on Europa, Jupiter's second moon, dramatically increasing the probability that life is lurking beneath its icy surface.

The Galileo unmanned space probe, currently surveying Jupiter and its satellites, has discovered traces of hydrocarbons - compounds containing carbon and hydrogen - on the surface of Europa, a world about the same size as our Moon. "This is certainly one of the requisites for having carbonbased life," said one of the team of scientists from the US space agency Nasa analysing the data.

Researchers are already increasingly confident that Europa consists of an icy shell about 30 miles thick, over a warm, dark ocean of water 80 miles deep, which is warmed by tidal forces from Jupiter. They

oceans that life can exist in total darkness, given warmth and chemicals to use as food.

The latest results, obtained by the probe on its 12th fly-by of Europa in January, were captured by an instrument called a Near Infrared Mapping Spectrometer (Nims). This can detect the absorption spectra - a radiation "fingerprint" - of substances on the surface.

During the fly-by, Galileo sent back data indicating that several organic compounds complex chemicals containing carbon - were present on Europa's surface, including substances called tholins. These are reckoned to have been present in Earth's "primordial soup", from which life is thought to have evolved 3 billion years ago.

Organic, carbon-based chemicals do not in themselves equal life. And similar findings have been made for other ob-

also know from Earth's deep jects in the solar system, notably in comets and several other moons of Jupiter. Nor do the scientists at Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, yet know exactly what compounds Galileo has detected. However, they think they are an exciting develop-

> "It could be alkanes, alkenes, aromatic hydrocarbons - if you are going to postulate any kind of organic chemical then these results would tie in with that," said William Smythe, who is analysing the Nims data from Galileo. "One of the absorption wavelengths indicated the presence of tholins - a sort of organic gunk. You get it left over from swamps, and it is also the stuff

Earth's primordial soup." It is not yet known where these chemicals come from. They could originate in comets, which are known to be rich in

thought to have been around in

surface of Europa is as mobile and active as many scientists believe, a more likely explanation is that they have made their way up from the depths.

Mr Smythe said: "It could be comets, we are certainly a long way from saying this stuff was made by sea serpents underneath the ice. It's a matter of taste really how you interpret these results until we have more data. Europa is one of the better places we have found for life-producing conditions. If all this stuff about icebergs is true, then it is more exciting than those meteorites from

High-resolution tographs of Europa taken by Galileo last year appeared to show "icebergs" apparently embedded in a liquid or slushy layer, and even dark "ponds" which could indicate areas where the ice is very thin.

Teenager's cell death is ruled an accident

returned a verdict of acciden- action. The family are not stoptal death after a 15-year-old burglary suspect was found hanged in a police cell. David Green of the lobby group Inquest, in Hartlepool, Cleveland, on Easter Monday last year and died in hospital two days later.

on suspicion of burglary and country about the particular vulday later he was found hanged ... in cells and the need for greater Andrew Jenkins who had vigilance and monitoring. found David in his home, said. Tam absolutely appalled at

the teenager had warned both. the failings of Cleveland police him and police that he was going to kill himself. Ruth Bundey, representing

David's family, had told the coroner. "The failures that have occurred in this case go beyond mere carelessness and amount accumulatively to a gross failure of care to a vulnerable, young man who had taken drugs." But the coroner, Malcolm

Donnelly, told the hearing in -Hartlepool that he could not direct the jury to return a verdict of neglect or lack of care. On instructing the jurors, he

said that even though David had put the rope around his neck. there was no suggestion that he intended to kill himself. He said it could have been a cry for help. After the inquest David's uncle, Alan Cotson, said: "We

hope this will never happen again. Something has got to be done to stop tragedies like this happening. This should never ever have happened in police custody to a 15-year-old bairn." Miss Bundey said: "This has been the first step. Inquest ver-

dicts are often a damp squib, but these five days have been invaluable because they have set iributed to this tragedy."

AN INQUEST jury yesterday us on our way to take civil ping here."

was found unconscious in a cell which represented the family, said: "David, at 15 years old, was the youngest person ever to die in police custody. This David, from Hartlepool, was should send a clear warning to detained on 30 March last year all police forces around the ing a controlled daug. A nearbility of young people held

> to care for a child in their care and the callous indifference that they have shown towards the family since David's tragic death over a year ago. To this day David's family have yet to receive any message of condo-David had told his mother,

Barbara, that he was a heroin user and was not afraid of dying, the inquest had heard. It was also revealed that the alarm buzzers in cells were not working when David died, but the custody officer, Sergeant David Harrison, said that he was not aware of this. Superintendent Kenneth Blackett, head of Cleveland Police's complaints department, said they were repaired in August - six months after the fault was found:

Supt Blackett said after the inquest: "This has been a harrowing 12 months for all those concerned with the tragedy, especially David's family. Lessons have been learnt, but I was reassured to note that the done by any of the police officers who dealt with David con-

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Supermarket brands 'not fooling shoppers'

By Louise Jury -

spot pale maitations of wellknown supermarket brands. Although makers of suc- as their brand rivals.

cessful branded products have long complained that similarlooking ones confuse the consumer, a survey has shown it is not a major problem.

tion found that nine per cent of Resco Honey Nut Cornflakes. 2 000 shoppers questioned admitted picking up a look-alike product by mistake thinking if was "the read thing".

But only four per cent actually bought it, usually spotting their mistake before getting to the cash bill. Of those, one in Wive were sery annoyed, but only a few felt really connect.

Some shoppers even claimed the look-alikes were useful.

Nearly a third liked them becan's their children would think THE BIG manufacturers need the supermarker brands were not fear. British consumers can the same as the big name items, and 40 per cent said children would think they were as good

Products identified as attracting particularly close imitations included Nescate Fine Blend coffee and Samsbury's Fall Roast and Kellogg's The Consumers' Associa- Crunchy Nut Cornflakes and Manufacturers who have

objected in the past include United Biscuits which successfully took Asda to court for "passing off" its own-brand Puffin biscuits as the betterknown Penguins.

Sainsbury's amended the packaging of its own-brand Classic Cola when Coca Cola objected to the similarities be-





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Yeltsin gamble pays off as Kiriyenko wins

By Phil Reev

A LARGE nail was thumped into the coffin of Russia's Communists yesterday after a humiliating defeat in parliament which finally, at the third and from a blunder, which began final vote, confirmed Boris ... Yeltsin's protégé as prime min-

Pressure is now on Gennady Zyuganov, runner-up in the last presidential election, to stand down as Communist leader after the majority of his faction's 138 members defied his orders - and those of the party's central committee - to vote against Sergēi Kiriyenko.

The result was a humiliation ... for the Communist party, which has grown to become the with the ill-planned dismissal of largest opposition force in Rus- the government. In the ensuing sia after being banned by Boris Yeltsin in 1991 but reinstated by

Although Mr Kiriyenko, a 35-year-old former banker and oil refinery manager, was widely expected to squeeze through, the vote turned out to be decisive enough, confirming him by a 251-25 margin. Quickly afterwards, he was summoned to the Kremlin where a tri-

ly appointed him in the post. Although the president hailed the result as a "victory of reason over emotion", the po-

litical cost was considerable. Mr Yeltsin's chief success was to have extracted himself

Communist leader faces pressure to step down as party

is humiliated

haggling with the State Duma (lower house), which twice rejected Mr Kiriyenko's nomination, Mr Yeltsin entered into a lengthy dialogue with its leadership. "He has established a precedent of consultation with the Duma," said one diplomatic source, "An invisible barrier has been crossed".

In the end his gamble paid off, although the appointment it-

if he had lost. Mr Yeltsin would have exercised his constitutional right to appoint Mr Kinyenko.

Under the constitution, the parliament would have automatically been dissolved, pending early elections. Last night, the youthful premier's opponents were left to fight off the certain criticism that they copped out, motivated by the desire to hang on to their comfortable, perk-rich Moscow jobs.

Mr Kirivenko was consistently opposed by the liberal group, Yabloko, which agreed to abstain - tantamount to a "no" vote. The Communists seem likely to argue that they did the same. Even this was a flagrant defiance of their leadership's call for an outright "no" vote. Moreover, some also clearly voted in favour.

Mr Zyuganov, once seen as a real challenger for the Kremlin, was left groping for an explanation. The ballot - which, critically, was held in secret - was "unfair". "Everyone wavered again," he said, "It should have been an open vote so that everyone's stand be clear and visible."

With a presidential election only two years away, these do not sound like the words of a



Sergei Kiriyenko applauds during yesterday's parliamentary session which confirmed him as prime minister Photograph: AP

The first task: shake off image as president's lapdog

THE man who is now officially only a heart beat away from. controlling Russia's nuclear button is a quietly spoken man- Yeltsin a month ago, there was ager who has spent less than a universal astonishment. Little year in the shark pool of Moscow politics. Yesterday's vote by the Russian parliament formally confirmed Sergei

tic that has led to a chorus of complaints that he is too inexperienced. When he was first thrust into

the limelight by President Boris was known about him, beyond the fact that he had fulfilled a brief stint as fuel and energy minister, and helped found a Boris Nemtsov, his friend. He also briefly headed the third biggest oil refinery, Norsi.

The rest of his biography was that of a drearily orthodox aspiring apparatchik: a degree from the Gorky Institute of Maritime Transport (where he studied ship building); mar-Kiriyenko as Prime Minister at bank in the city of Nizhny Nov- a job with the Komsomol, the that, as a banker, he took part the tender age of 35 a statis gorod the stamping ground of Communist Youth League. He in a week-long seminar organ-

the first deputy prime minister, says he still has his Communist Party card somewhere. Since then a fuller picture has emerged, decorated with several intriguing details.

Efforts have been made to sell him to a sceptical Russian nation by portraying him as a fan of boxing, scuba diving, and Japanese martial arts. He has riage to a student sweetheart: also yet to clarify fully claims

ised by the Church of Scientology and encouraged col-According to Mr Yeltsin's leagues to do the same.

Mr Kiriyenko - who is part-Jewish - has broadly denied any connections, but has not addressed the issue in detail. The task ahead will be to shake off the impression that he is Boris Yeltsin's lapdog. In a clumsy effort to appear beholden to no party, he himself has reinforced his image as Kremlin puppet by

declaring allegiance to no one but the president himself.

former bodyguard, Alexander Korzhakov, he is also indebted to the president's daughter and adviser, Tatyana. His connection with Russia's first family was forged doing oil business with her husband, says Mr Korzhakov. Yet, despite a manner which is about as flashy as a that he is a tougher cookie than pencil sharpener, the new pre-

mier's speeches to an angry parliament in the last month were clear-cut and business-like.

He tackles questions with the almost irritating efficiency of a desk clerk brushing off an enraged customer, quoting the rule book from memory. As he made his final appearance yesterday, grinning occasionally at his opponents, he showed most previously imagined.

Father 'injected son with Aids'

IN ONE of the more horrific and bizarre cases to come out of the United States, a 31-yearold laboratory assistant from St Louis, Missouri, has pleaded not guilty to a charge of first-degree assault for allegedly injecting his infant son with the HIV virus. The suspected motive was to avoid paying child support. writes Mary Dejevsky in Wash-

According to the child's mother, who remains anonymous to protect the identity of the child, her ex-husband told her not to bother asking for child support because the boy would not live very long.

Now seven, the child was diagnosed with full-blown Aids in 1996, after years of tests had failed to establish the reason for his constant ill-health. Police now say the boy's father. Brian Stewart, deliberately injected him with a syringe of HIV-infected blood when he was 11 months old. They believe the incident took place in 1992, when the boy was in a St Louis hospital being treated for a breathing problem. Stewart was divorcing his wife and reportedly questioned whether the child was his. Witnesses have said they saw Stewart acting suspiciously at the hospital.

He was charged on Thursday after a two-year investigation which began when doctors at the hospital questioned how the child had contracted Aids.

"After eliminating all possible ways that this kid could obtain the HIV virus, with the threats the father made it was determined that he was the suspect," the county police chief, Douglas Saulters, said. "It's something that's monstrous."

Stewart, who is in prison trying to raise the \$500,000 bail payment, has denied the accu-

His lawyer decried the publicity attending the case. "My client has maintained all along that he is innocent." he said, I believe him." He complained Stewart had already been convicted by the media.

Nigeria prepares for trouble at polls

ABUJA, Nigeria (AP) - Para- explained explosions this week military forces spread through which left nine people dead, out Nigeria yesterday over along with the threat of vioconcerns that voting today lence, boycotts and overall pocould trigger violence between litical apathy may keep turnout supporters of the military jun- at the polls very low. Last year, 12 and pro-democracy activists. about 10 per cent of the elec-

About 50 million people are torate turned out to vote in state

Senate and House of Repre- any competition, opposition sentatives come just days after the military ruler General Sani Abacha became the sole candidate for presidential elections planned for August.

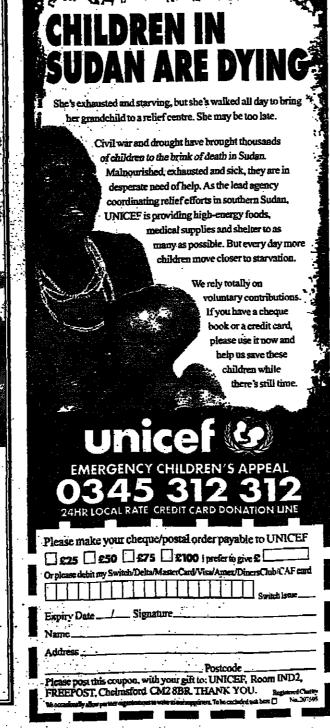
Claiming that General Abacha manipulated the nom-

The elections for Nigeria's ination process to eliminate groups have called for a boycott of all elections. Although today's election was touted as a key element in Nigeria's transition from military to civilian rule. government opponents say the



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as French hotels fleece the fans

By John Lichfield in Paris

DESPITE the pleas of the French government, tourists seeking hotels in France durfleeced. A survey by the consumer union has found hotels increased their prices for June and July by up to 200 per cent.

The average increase in the 10 World Cup organising towns is 41 per cent. Worse may be to come. Many hotels are refusing to take bookings for the World Cup weeks, or pretending they are fully oc-cupied. In that way, they hope to have rooms left which they can sell at astronomic ... free market? prices to latecomers," said Bertrand Lecourt, president of the Paris chamber of hoteliers.

Who said the French did not understand the workings of the free market? The hyper-inflation of room prices, though understandable with 2,500,000 extra tourists expected, will disappoint the government. Michelle Demessine, minister of state for tourism, has pleaded with hoteliers to think in dium, an average room price

terms of attracting first-time visitors to come back to France again and again - not to pocket an immediate profit.

About 750 hotels have joined an official scheme guaring the World Cup are being anteeing prices will not increase by more than 25 per cent. Others have joined a scheme which guarantees no

> Who said the French do not understand the workings of the

increase of prices at ail. But a survey of hotels in and around the World Cup cities, published by the consumer magazine Que Choisir?, found huge increases at other hotels. In Saint-Denis, in the northern Paris suburbs, home of the competition's showpiece sta-

had risen from Fr397 (£40) to Fr626, a 58-per-cent increase.

In Paris, increases were more reasonable, from £56 to £78 - 38 per cent up. The least demanding place was the small town of Lens, site of England's third first-phase game, where hotels were marking up prices by 30 per cent. The worst single increase was the Bal-

ladins, on the outskirts of Marseilles, which was asking £69 a night instead of £23. The George V hotel in Montpellier was asking for 147 per cent more, the Glasgow Hotel in Paris 77 per cent extra. The consumer union said it

had found some hotels that were behaving reasonably but also some hotels in the official price-restraint programmes which were cheating. It said the wary tourist or football fan should shop around and consider staying a little way from the host cities. Despite the influx, there should not be a desperate shortage of rooms from 10 June to 12 July. Hundreds of thousands of other tourists are expected to stay away from France in that period.



Winnings ways: The official World Cup poster, unveiled this week. Nathalie Le Gall, an art student from Montpellier, won the design competition.

ticket, but can you get there?

By Simon Calder Travel Editor

WITHIN hours of the draw for France '98, I called British Airways to try to book a flight to Marseille for England's opening game, against Timisia on 15 June. Like many fans, I held out little hope of finding a ticket for the game, but the opportunity to soak up the atmosphere in the most North African of French cities was too good to pass up. The only seat available cost more than £600 return.

Anyone who got through to the France '98 ticket line will find it tough to find a cheap fare to the match. The same applies to ordinary tourists who want to travel to France on key dates in June and July.

Most low fares on flights from Britain to the venues around match dates were sold in advance to organisations such as the English and Scottish Football Associations, event sponsors and tour operators," a spokesman for Air France said yesterday. "There is some space in business class, at higher fares, which is being held for. business travellers who typically

Many travellers will instead use ferries or the Channel Tunnel to reach the venues. Eurostar, which runs passenger trains from London Waterloo to Lille and Paris, yesterday reported brisk bookings during the tournament.

The closest fixture to Britain England's game against Colombia, in Lens on 26 June - has resulted in a flood of bookings to Lille, with almost all the cheaper fares sold out.

A Eurostar spokesman said the company had no plans to add capacity during the tournament: "We have capacity well in excess of the number of tickets held by fans of England and Scotland, so we have no plans to run extra trains." Eurostar can carry 26,000 passengers per day between London and Paris.

Tour operators fear a slump in holiday bookings during the tournament. On average, France attracts 5 million overseas tourists a month, but the presence of an estimated halfmillion soccer fans may be a deterrent. The last European country to stage the World Cup, Italy in 1990, experienced a fall of 25 per cent in





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Mexican family held over sex-slave ring

By Phil Davison

AT LEAST 20 Mexican women, one aged 14, were told by an agency in their home town they were being given a chance at "the American dream" as maids, waitresses or nurses. Instead, they were forced into low-level prostitution in the southern United States by a sex slavery ring.

A US federal indictment published in Miami yesterday said eight members of a Mexican family from the city of Veracruz, mostly illegal immigrants, had been arrested in Florida and South Carolina on charges of smuggling illegal aliens, extortion and "involuntary servitude". Eight more suspects, mostly from the same

used at night as mobile brothels, and were forced to have sex charges. with migrant farm workers in their work camps. The ringleaders charged their clients \$20 (£12) for a sex session of which they gave the women only three task force against worker ex-

When the women tried to fiee, they were chased, brought back and beaten, and sometimes raped. Those who got pregnant were forced to have - eradicate it in America." abortions. One woman was locked in a cupboard for two weeks, according to the indict-

Police became aware of the case after two 15-year-old Mexican girls escaped and showed up at Miami's Mexican consulate seeking help. Most of the victims are now in care, are be-Veracruz family, were being ing granted temporary immigrant status and are to give The indictment said the evidence, investigators said.

women were locked in trailers. The detainees face up to life imprisonment if convicted on all

> Partly as a result of the latest case, the US Attorney-General Janet Reno announced that she had set up a special ploitation and "modern-day

> Ms Repo said: "We are not interested in containing modern-day slavery. We want to

The last similar case was in New York City, where several dozen deaf Mexican immigrants were kept locked up by a gang and forced to sell trinkets, guarded by their captors, in streets or subway stations.

In Los Angeles, a group of 70 Thai women were kept in squalid conditions behind barbed wire by a gang who forced them to produce cheap

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Genocide executions in Rwanda

By Rupert Cornwell

IGNORING appeals from the Pope, the United States and the European Union, Rwanda vesterday went ahead with the publie executions of 22 people condemned to death over the 1994 genocide in which up to I million people - one-seventh of the country's population were slaughtered.

The first sentences were carried out in the capital. Kigali, where thousands watched as a batch of four Hutu convicts were led out to face a firing squad in a football stadium. Dressed in

'We are not sadists. There is a legacy of political ruthlessness.

lustice must be done

pink uniforms, the three men and one woman were tied to posts, black hoods fastened over their heads, and white t inds with targets tied aroun I their chests.

For two minutes, according to eyewitnesses, the crowds boord and jeered. Then, at 10,49am, blue-uniformed policemen with rifles walked up and shot the four from a range of barely one yard. After the firing, the or lookers fell silent for a man nt before breaking out in cheers.

"God is good." one spectator cried out, while another commented that: "This is justice, but it's not enough. It would have been better to cut off their lingers one at a time, and then kill them slowly." Such is the inevitable, persisting thirst for revenge after the rampages four their death squads, searching out minority Tutsis and moderate

A few minutes later, similar scenes took place in the provincial towns of Gikongoro. Nyamata. Cyasemakamba and Murambi. In Nyamata, south of the capital, students were given the day off school, and parents brought their smaller children with them on bicycles to the execution site.

Again the condemned, five men this time, were lashed to wooden posts, with a black target tied to their chests. But it took a reported five minutes for the sentences to be carried out fully. The masked executioners fired over 100 rounds into their victims, sending splinters flying from the stakes to which they were attached. Then a policeman with a revolver administered the coup de grace.

For all the pleas for mercy, there was never much chance the outsiders would be heeded. The British EU Presidency, which earlier called for a stay, declared its "dismay" at the public executions. But the widespread feeling in Rwanda is that the EU and the rest of the international community did too little when it really mattered. Indeed, France is currently being forced to deny allegations it lent tacit support to the Hutu extremists, and as one Rwanda government official asked yesterday: "Where was the Pope in 1994?" Or as Cabo Ninyetegeta, an aide to President Pasteur Bizimungu (himself a Hutu) put it: "We are not sadists. But there is a legacy of political ruthlessness. Justice must be

The hostility spilled over onto foreign journalists. In an effort to minimise international outcry, the authorities forbade reporters in Kigali to record the executions. and confiscated film from news agency photographers. At the sites, some foreign reporters said they were harrassed by civil-



Prayer vigil: A Tibetan Buddhist nun praying in front of the United Nations headquarters in New Delhi for six fellow Photograph: John McConnico/AP Tibetans who entered their 46th day of a hunger strike yesterday

Japanese recession fails to ruffle Hashimoto

By Richard Lloyd Parry

NO ONE would claim Ryutaro Hashimoto has been having an easy time, but it is a measure of the political paralysis in Tokyo that after one of the roughest periods in Japanese memory he is still Prime Minister.

In any other country he would be on the ropes, if not out for the count. Yesterday, after more than a week of dithering. he finally came up with the details of a 20 trillion yen (about £90bn) programme of tax cuts and public spending which has pleased almost no one.

Mr Hashimoto's Liberal Democrat Party (LDP) is divided over it. Japanese business appears to have little confidence in the prime minister, and a leader of a powerful business association said this week that Mr Hashimoto should resign.

On the same day, the previonsly supportive Yomiuri newspaper expressed its disgust, and compared Japan under Mr Hashimoto's rule to the Titanic just before it hit the iceberg. Above all, his opinion poll ratings are at a record low of below 40 per cent, less than two months before elections to the Upper House. But for all this, the most remarkable and depressing thing about Mr Hashimoto is how safe he looks.

The situation is not all Mr Hashimoto's fault. The reasons for Japan's slow-down, since. the heights of the "bubble economy in the 1980s, are deeprooted and Mr Hashimoto: seems genuinely to wish to reform the economy, and the over-regulation in which it is mired. For weeks, independent economists and foreign governments have been urging Japan to cut taxes and press on with the "Big Bang", a rolling programme intended to open the financial system up to competition and improve its efficiency. But powerful vested interests

stand to lose out in the reforms and many have representatives in the LDP. One wing of the party favours tax cuts bigger than those unveiled vesterday, another favours reining in public spending. LDP members on all sides are concerned to direct as much as possible of the new money in the direction of their own constituencies and pet projects.

But there are few credible challengers to Mr Hashimoto. The Foreign Minister, Keizo Obuchi, is spoken of as a possible successor but he is an uncharismatic, if amiable, figure with none of Mr Hashimoto's



Hashimoto: Looks safe despite calls to resign

fire and drive. The most prominent opposition leader, Naoto Kan, an ambitious reformer who compares himself to Tony Blair, is popular. But the anti-LDP parties are divided.

"There's a prevailing sense of distrust with all politicians." says the political commentator, Minoru Morita. "The feeling of hopelessness, the sense that there's nothing we can do, reminds me of August 1945, after the end of the war."

John Neuffer, a political analyst at Mitsui Marine Research, said: "The real question is when is the government going to bite the bullet, and start dividing out the pain. They've never done that before. They've just made people feel good for 50 years."

Shabby tiger claims to have swapped capitalism for contentment

pathy for the poor old Thai erament, which has inherited a currency going through the floor, a stock market which even the rats are deserting and very serious problems of unemployment. Governments have different ways of tackling crises but in most cases they pursue a strategy of lowering expectations so that whatever is achieved looks that much better. The government of Chuan Leekpai has decided that Thailand no comes contentment. The conlonger aspires to having a tiger economy but will make do with a "contented economy". Out

goes export-led growth, in

DIARY



Stephen Vines

tented economy will focus on Thailand's rural roots, It is not quite clear whether the change in terminology will suffice to come thanks to the opening of

known as members of the "hi-British colonies of America and Australia.

¬VEN though the economic crisis is undeni-⊿ably bad news it has eased the world's worst traffic. Trade has ground to a halt in gridlock. Some of the easing has portable toilets for those caught

though it may instill some re- to the fact that second and third alism. A friend in the wine im- cars of the city's middle class are quaintly named weekend marso" (high society or chic) are re- ket of the "previously rich" with wines from somewhere bargains to be had in low ently a reference to the former other luxury cars. The relatively free flow of the traffic has across town can be accomplished without taking a copy of War and Peace to fill the long hours sitting in traffic jams. short in mid-jam.

pull Thailand out of recession. new flyovers but most is down The crisis is great news tival, an estimated 100,000 wor- in mid-April. Songkran is also hostile crowd. The situation was porting business tells me that now being firmly locked inside ligion which might be described things are so bad that what are garages or even sold at the as a more evangelical form of failed to bring happiness - for Buddhism. Natayada na many people in the past year Songkhla, a columnist for the they have brought more grief placing their French vintages where there are some fabulous Nation newspaper in Bangkok, notes that he has "never seen called the New World; appar- mileage Mercedes Benz and as much public interest in religion as there is now". This is really something because Thais transformed the city. Journeys are no slouches when it comes to religious observance. It is deeply dug into the routine of daily life. What is new is the it will have done its duty. The mass attendance at some of the monks such as Wat Dham- Thai new year, known as makaya where, at a recent fes- Songkran, which usually occurs Finns were surrounded by a happens next year.

people start to look for something to give a meaning to

f this newspaper can be of no service to its readers contemplating a trip to Thailand other than this one tip. advice is simple: avoid visiting

days a battery of pump action torised water gangs means that the wife of a Finnish diplomat caused a national furore by slapping a child who drenched her in water after she asked him

for religion, more specif-shippers were in attendance. As a water festival. In the old days finally defused, but not without ically a certain kind of re- Mr Natayada acutely observes, it meant a playful splash of wa- a humble apology by the "because capitalist values have ter in the streets making woman in question and assurpassers-by get a little wet. These ances that Thai-Finnish relations were not at stake. water guns, buckets and mo- Newspaper editorials blasted the farang or foreigner for not passers-by are more likely to get being sensitive to Thai customs; completely drenched as they go the Finnish Embassy went into about their business. Matters full damage limitation mode. came to a head this year in the Then the backlash began. Worholiday town of Pattaya where thy citizens called up radio stations and wrote to newspapers letting it be known that they too were fed up with being drenched during Songkran. temples with charismatic the Land of Smiles during the not to. News of the slap pro- Water hooliganism must end, duced a nasty stand off as the they demanded. We'll see what

AUF WIEDERSEHEN



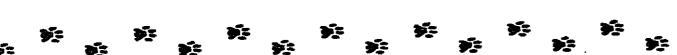


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Dutroux escape pushes Belgium into crisis



National outrage: Belgian newspapers yesterday reflected their country's sense of shame and anger as the government came under mounting public pressure over the escape of the alleged child-killer Marc Dutroux

BELGIUM'S political crisis intensified vesterday despite the recapture of "public enemy number one" Marc Dutroux and the sacking of two senior government ministers held responsible for the shocking blunders which allowed him to escape for several hours on Thursday.

Dutroux, awaiting trial for the abduction, rape and murder of four young girls whose bodies were found buried on his property, spent an afternoon on the run after a bizarre larse in security at the regional courthouse where he had been taken to consult his case files.

It later emerged that the guns carried by his guards were not loaded and that his handcuffs had been removed, facilitating his getaway and the two car-jackings he carried out. Police were so disorganised they had to requisition a passing car to give chase initially. The Gendarmerie yesterday blamed "budgetary reasons" for the fact that only two officers were assigned to watch Dutroux.

Despite the unprecedented ministerial resignations, opposition deputies clamoured for the the entire government to stand down and tabled a motion of no confidence which will go to a vote on Tuesday.

Prime minister Jean Luc Dehaene's centre-left coalition may survive this vote by a nar-

row margin but there are signs that the fragile governmental consensus could nevertheless collapse amid mounting tensions between the ruling factions over the direction of police, judicial, and constitutional re-

Public pressure for more heads to roll mounted as leaders of the "white committees" - a grassroots movement formed last year after the Dutroux scandal broke - called on Belgians to take to the streets. Demonstrators were gathering last night at the Palais

> 'Anyone with responsibility, either direct or indirect. should resign

de Justice in Brussels where a floral shrine to Dutroux's young victims carried a placard calling on the government of resign.

Elio Di Rupo, the deputy prime minister, fuelled demands for the police chief, Willy Deridder, to be sacked. "Anyone with responsibility, either direct or indirect, must resign," he said

The Brussels media yester-

on promises of reform. The most glaring faults of the police and judiciary were brought to light months ago by a parliamentary inquiry but nothing much has changed.

"Unforgivable" summed up the banner headline in the daily La Lanterne, "Shame" was the headline on a front-page editorial in Le Soir, while La Libro Belgique said the event summed up the "pathology" underlying Belgium.

The Dutch-speaking press also reflected mounting Flumish frustration at the "artificial" political construction which many feel has lumbered them with a corrupt and decrepit "other half" - the Walloon French-speaking side of Beloium. There was anger that the two sacked ministers. Johan Vande Lanotte and Stefaan de Clerck, in charge of the interior and justice, were both Flemish, even though most of the incompetence and comunition and of course the crimes, have been traced to the French speaking cities of Liege, Namur and Charleroi.

Some observers were betting yesterday Mr Dehaene would stake the survival of his coalition on an emergency package of reforms which have up to now been blocked by inter-party wrangling. But the landscape could "change dramatically" said Bart Sturtewagen of De day cried out for answers and Standaard the Flemish daily, if reflected national outrage at the people take to the streets again.

Auction of Goya letter highlights mystery of Spain's royal treasures

tentmen

THE sale at auction in London recently of a letter, written by the artist Goya to a minister at the Spanish court in 1801, has infuriated Goya expens who accuse the Spanish authorities of negligently letting the documissing from royal archives.

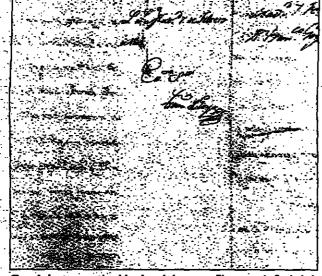
Their anger is all the greater because the letter, described as "rare" and "important" in Sotheby's catalogue for its sale of 31 March, had been sold privately in 1991. The experts complained then to the royal palace in Madrid, but never received a reply.

This kind of letter, addressed to a minister of state not just to a private individual, almost never comes on to the market unless it bas been stolen from a state archive," says Nigel Glendinning, retired professor of 18th-century Spanish literature at London University and author of several books on Gova. "I wrote and sent evidence ... when Christie's anctioned the same letter on 26 June 1991, alerting the Spanish authorities to the loss and urging them to act. But they never even replied." Sotheby's put the estimated value of the letter at £15,000 to £20,000.

Professor Glendinning emphasises that no blame attaches to Sotheby's, which went ahead with the sale because it heard nothing from Madrid. "They told me they would have withdrawn the letter from sale if they had received a fax from the royal palace that morning, but I only heard about the sale the day before and it was too late. I also urged the cultural attaché at the Spanish embassy in London to do whatever he could. Nothing came of that ei-

The professor's dismay is shared by Juliet Wilson-Bareau. considered the world's top Gova expert, who curated exhibitions in Madrid for the Prado and the city's National of things going missing. One wondered how things had found their way into private hands. To archive files is a disaster for researchers. It's particularly horrifying in the present case, when the authorities had already been aierted on a previous occasion. No action seems to have been taken since the last cpisode, when we all gut very agitated and were assured an investigation was being made.

But it all fizzled out." The contents of the letter by Goya, chief court painter, to the



Goya's letter to the king's minister

king's minister Pedro Ceballos, offer an insight into palace intrigues and battles over the care of royal paintings. In 1800 several people offered to restore paintings in the collection and King Carlos, and his minister, Don Pedro, asked Goya for his opinion. Goya dismissed the applicants' technical skill, saying their methods were not new and caused more damage than they

In his letter, dated 7 February 1801, Goya states vehemently his disapproval of transferring paintings from one canvas to another. There is no special way of preparing the

> 'I was offered Goya documents that bore serial numbers of the palace archives'

canvas, simply that no great painting can undergo such a process without suffering damage: "Time destroys only one painting per century, whereas restorers destroy a hundred." he Library. "One has been aware wrote. "In ... painting there are no secrets, only genius, study and reason.

But what Goya really wanthive off documents from their ed, Professor Glendinning says, was to keep the restoration work in his own gift, or pass it to his protégé, Maella. Goya was concerned that restorers at the Prado were harming the pictures they worked on and complained to Ceballos that they were destroying the delicacy and skill of the original brushwork. His own paintings were later to suffer from the transfer process he condemns in his letter.

The Prado was among those

that bid for the letter, without knowing its provenance was dodgy, when Christie's offered it for sale in 1991, says Manuela Mena, head of 18th-century Spanish painting at the Prado and a Goya specialist, who at the time was the museum's deputy director. "But it went above what we could afford and we lost it." Soon afterwards, Ms Mena says, "I was offered by a private dealer some 15 Gova original documents that bore the serial numbers of the palace archives." Police secured the return of most but the palace never explained how it lost them. She adds that there was silence when a Velazquez painting went missing from the palace some years ago. But why, if the palace knew this Goya letter was missing from its archive, did it take no action when it came up for sale a second time? "I don't know, it's shameful. It's a mystery what goes on there," Ms Mena said. A facsimile of the four-page

nio Nacional (National Heritage), Reales Sitios, XVII, No 64, 1980, pp 66-67. It illustrates an article by Marcelino Tobajas headed: "Documents of the Palace Archive. 1800: Goya and a pictorial war in the former King's residence of the Buen Retiro." The Buen Retiro, a former dependency of the royal palace, today houses the Prado's 19th-century collection. Footnote 14 of Tobajas's article cites "Buen Retiro. Carlos IV. Bundle number 9" as the main source of documents quoted, including Goya's letter. The authorities of the Patrimonio Nacional at the Royal Palace in Madrid, pressed since 31 March for information about how the letter came to be extracted from their archive, said after repeated prodding that they were

investigating the matter.

letter is reproduced in the of-

ficial magazine of the Patrimo-



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Poisoned Tigris spreads tide of death in Iraq

By Patrick Cockburn n Baghirae

WHEN Hulagu, the grandson of Genghis Khan, sacked Baghdad in 1258 Iraqis say the water in the rivor Tigris changed colour twice. On the first day it turned red with the blood of the thousands slaughtered by the Mongols; on the second it went black because of the ink from the books - from what were then the greatest libraries in the world which Hulagu threw into the river.

Now the Tigris has changed colour again. It is a rich café-au-luit brown, because raw sewage from 3.5 million people in Baghdad and cities upstream is entering the river. As with the Mongols the new colour implies disaster. Contamination of drinking water is the main reason why the proportion of tragi children who die before they reach 12 months old has risen from 3.7 per cent in the year before sanctions were imposed in 1990 to 12 per

"The infrastructure is collapsing," says Denis Halliday, the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator for Iraq, "Electric power is 40 per cent of what it used to be. This affects drinkable water supplies and infant mortality." In the flat Iraqi countryside everything, both water and sewage, must be pumped. There are few wells. Almost all water must come from the Tigris and Euphrates and both get progressively dirtier as they pass through the cities the Red Cross, says the main prob-

of Iraq on their way to the sea. In Divala province, east of the capital, last week, a woman named Nahay Mohammed was clambering down the side of an irrigation canal with a steel bucket to get water. "It is bad water, of course," she said, "It gives you stomach pains and hurts the kidneys, but the purified water supply was cut off in 1991. Heliathan Alwan, a farmer from the same village, said he had recently visited the nearest town to see if they could restore the drinking water but

was told it was impossible. A visit to the main water plant



Business is brisk for this Tigris ferryman because petrol rationing has forced Baghdad's citizens to mothball their cars

showed why. The technician in charge was away and we were shown around by a watchman who said he earned £3 a month. He lived beside the plant in a mud-andreed house, which looked exactly like those inhabited by ancient Sumerians 3.000 years ago. Half the pumps were not working and those that were had been repaired by the International Committee of the

In Baghdad, Evaristo Oliveira, a water and sanitation engineer with tems in supplying water are lack of spare parts, absence of staff and poor electrical supply. He said: "I have been in plants where there are naked electrical wires currying a high current and the only insulation is plastic bags."

Denis Halliday says that his office has estimated that \$10bn (£6bn) is needed to restore Iran's electrical system, but only \$300m can be

He adds: "We have generators which are 20 years old. When we go to the manufacturers either they or they don't want to sell them." Given that Iraq has the capacity to export only \$4bn worth of oil every six months it is unlikely that the Iraqi electrical system will be restored any time soon. In the meantime. Baghdad has power cuts of about five or six hours a day - a figure which rises to 14-16 hours in the countryside.

in what was once a prosperous village called al-Yaat on the banks of the Diyala river, Buha'a Hussein al -Sayef explained the effect of the lack of electricity and water on his community of 300 people.

plant has long ceased working. They now pump contaminated irrigation water directly to their his cousin Ahmed, a visibly alling stood in his farmyard in the nearhomes. Mr Al-Sayef said: "Last year some of our fields dried and because we did not have enough electricity to pump water to them. We had to abandon them".

In theory, people in Al-Yaat should be better off than almost anybody else in Iraq. They have rich land, grow their own food and can take advantage of high prices in the of the Iraqi medical system is their don't make the spare parts any more city. Mr al-Sayef said life was not



Searching task: An fracti boy panning the polluted waters of the Tigris for lost gold and valuables. Such

quite like that. He introduced said Ali Ahmed Suwaidan, as he of sanctions, says Mr al-Sayef. 24-year-old who had been operated on at the Cromwell Hospital in London in 1985 for heart problems. He was meant to have further surgery, but the family had not been able to pay for it.

Other farmers say that, along with the deterioration of the water and electricity supply, the collapse main problem. "I am desperate."

by village of al-Aitha. He held out old x-rays of the head of his fiveyear-old daughter Fatima, who was playing at his feet. "There is something wrong with her balance," he explained. "She cannot stand up." He held her upright for a moment and then removed his hands. Fatima immediately crumpled.

"Everybody here feels gloomy and depressed because of the results

"That is probably why so many people fall ill."

The reasons for the depression are obvious enough. "For most Iraqis the pleasant things of life are missing," says Denis Halliday. Iraqis need to look forward to more than getting just enough to eat to stay alive. He says that when Iraqi children were asked in a poll what they would like for their birthday most said they wanted an egg.

Serbs kill 23 in Kosovo

FEDERAL troups banking Terrorists" had killed 23 pro-independence ethnic Albanian militants in Serbia's Kosovo province, the Yugoslav Army said vesterday.

Two Albanians were captured and ammunition was seized when the army engaged about 200 "Albanian terrorists," on Thursday, the Yugoslav Army said.

The high death-toll - and a resounding Serb vote in a referendum on Thursday against foreign mediation in the Kosovo crisis - ratcheted up tension in the Albanian-dominated province. Referendum results released yesterday had 94.73 per cent of the Serbs who voted rejecting outside mediation in talks between Serbian government officials and Kosovo's Albanian leaders on the province's future.

Spaced out

RUSSIA'S failure to meet its pledges could delay by up to three years the international space station. An independent advisory board, appointed by Nasa, concluded that the US share of the project would climb to about \$24.7bn.

Hardware for the international space station is being built by 16 nations on four continents. The principal partners are the United States. Russia, Japan, Canada and the European Space Agency.

— AP, Washington

Harare riots

RIOT police yesterday fought run-ning battles at Harare's University of Zimbabwe with students trying to march into town to protest against Wednesday's shooting of a student by a police officer.

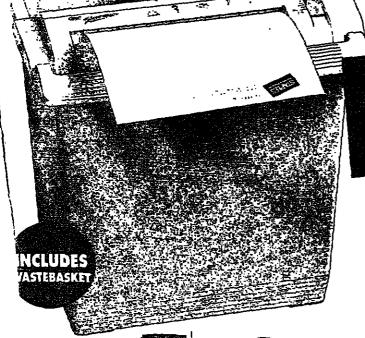
Witnesses said the police, armed with shotguns, batons and shields. tear-gassed students who tried to march to the city centre. Police sealed all campus exits to students.

Dark horse

THE racehorse Tulsy Tsan was withdrawn hours before she was due to race in Wellington today after the racing authorities discovered the name spelt backwards could be offensive. the Evening Post reported. She was renamed Ben Again and returned to

... — AP, Wellington







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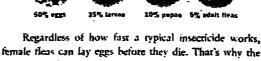
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Spaced out

Marare riots

Dark horse

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ecticide.

Attractions: From left, Reuben Mednikoff's The Stairway to Paradise is at Hove Museum and Art Gallery from 2 May-5 July; Forkbeard's The Barbers of Surreal is at the Gardner Centre on 10-11 May; Rosas present Microkosmos also at the Gardner Centre 18-19 May and at thef estival from 2-24 May

Peerless Brighton

Once every year Brighton shrugs off its seaside image and glories in the arts. Jay Merrick picks out the hottest tickets in town

Behind a flaking Regency facade, a retired tea planter will have that damnable Darjeeling flashback for the thousandth time. In the tatty New Steine district scores of £20-a-Nite bedsteads will begin to judder and squinch with the approach of statutory orgasms coddled in staticrich velour trimmings and the first clammy niffs from lard sprizzling in breakfast kitchens which have become Mission Controls for the real

EXT Saturday Brighton will wake up in its inimitable

weekend way. Gulls will set-

tle in mewling grey tatters over glittering bangles of squashed onion

rings by the Palace Pier. Manky

geezers will leg it up St James's Street

glugging cans of Nurishment to

make sure other manky geezers

know that they've been largin' it with

the latest drop-the-lot pill posse at

the Escape Club.

And who among this human confetti will spare a thought for the Brighton Festival, which will begin that very day to scatter its largesse - 800 events in Britain's second biggest arts festival, running until 24 May? Will they care a fig about its remarkably rich visual arts, cutting edge theatre and dance, highly ambitious four-day street theatre programme, concerts and a raft of intriguing fringe shows?

F-phrase: the Full English.

In a place that remains almost literally underwritten by the ghostly prose of the likes of Graham Greene and Patrick Hamilton - brilliant, prescient toffs with a taste for Brighton's less than refined aspects - the arts remains ambered in a peculiar halflight. They are accepted as transientphenomena in an urban petri dish crammed with competing cultural activity that comes and goes like flot-... sam on a tide of cool unconcern.

These remarks would go down like a rancid blowfish on Meissen plate with a certain mishing about rose plantings in rooms crammed with tartan-clad Tacades of Sussex Square and Lewes Crescent with an intimate knowledge of Zola - the writer, not the footballer; or others, taking the air in Montpelier Villas, who think that Noel Coward is simply divine, or still more, sitting mummified in best bibs and tuckers at One Paston Place before a plate of A la Recherche du Tempura Perdu ('Of course there's nothing on the plate, madam, that's the whole point') who think Nigel's haircuts are a slap in the face for

Yehudi after all he done - er, sorry, has done - for that ungrateful boy. Despite a demonstrably artsrone populace leavened with more than 20,000 ternary-level students, the Brighton Festival remains an exsharp local tang. ercise in excellence in a town where

perlative but as an insouciant general purpose punctilio. In Edinburgh, which does not suffer the estimated five million imported one-and two-night biasons amouneux that Brighton's kiss-mequick economy depends on annually, tickets for the majority of festival

"excellent" is often used not as a su-

events are typically sold out within

The festival hinges on something fundamentally richer than hired guns - its own local talent. often dazzlingly ephemeral

tranche of Brighton and Hove's days. One imagines an endless Ed-250,000 inhabitants. When not skir-inburgh vista of Morningside sitting their elegant private gardens, there - mogochi wailing: "Give one culture, may be those behind the Grade I fa- and rate nool. One cannae get enough!" There is no Royal Mile in Brighton, just a dense architectural cut-up: the grubby caroud artery of Western Road, the vicious architectural head-butt known as Churchill Square, the ghost-ship superstructure of Embassy Court and interjections of increasingly threadbare Georgian and Regency

> The natives do not gag for art and expression. They take it for granted; it's no different to street life -

stuff just happens. And so the festival, or anything else in the town that might resemble a pukkah branding exercise, has to deliver a special brew, a cultural six-pack with a

attractions. The classical music programme includes the best orchestras from Detroit, London and Berlin, along with the Tokyo String Quartet and John Tomlinson in Boris Godunov.

by, Maya Angelou, Hanif Kureishi and Jung Chang. The supporting cast includes Glen Baxter, Nicholson Baker, and local resident Julie Burchill. You might even

"live" shopping.
The linked Charleston Festival presents Jeanette Winterson, Alison Lurie, Barbara Trapido and a luvvie-fest with Eileen Atkins and Simon Callow "doing" Ms Woolf

weighting, Five Mondays in May presents new play readings at the not-Bloomsbury

well-known artists seems well-stuffed in every field. Lee Evans is one of a gaggle of familiar comedy headliners. The dance programme - a

particular interest of festival diic Angelus in St Peter's Church, a rector Chris Barron - looks richly complex singing in tongues sharp, with appearances by which fused blissed-out township a Mikrokosmos and the combined Cholmondeleys and Featherstonehaughs, who will premiere year, alas, but they can be seen on Beach Huts. Mr Barron's scouting trip to China also unearthed

cable TV during May. Exhibit B: the town's swirling daub of visual artists, which Mr Barron insists is the richest concentration in Britain. The list of artists' homes and studios open to visitors runs into dozens. The Five Ways group is probably the best known, with Harvey Daniels heading the

cappella with Gregorian chant and

folk themes. No appearance this

But by definition, it will be the

Brighton is an urban petri dish crammed with competing cultural activity that comes and goes like flotsam on a tide of cool unconcern

less heralded who will spring the surprises: Gary Sollars massive portraits at the old Evening Argus building is a must; as is the open house at the flakey Phoenix Gallery.

Not even passing house-hunters are safe: those who wander into Bonett's estate agents in Kemptown will be temporarily Zimmered by Brian Stacey's deranged tableaux. A soothing antidote can be administered by visiting Ditchling Museum, where the exquisite glazes on Yoshi Hamada's pottery are like meniscuses floating between physical fact and the void.

It is typical of "excellent" Brighton that its strongest homebrew, the visual arts, has no dedicated exhibition space - though Mr Barron's just-announced scheme for a multi-million pound Lotteryfunded makeover of the Dome complex is poised to give the town the best music, dance and exhibition centre in the south.

Even so, high art may never he the needle in Brighton's dishevelled arts haystack, because lo-fi variants give the kind of loose, funky fit favoured in a town where theatre. music and artifice has a more natural affinity with the tangled braid of the borough's defining flavours: dead air in the used clothes shops in the North Lanes; the tap-dancing astrologer Zembla van Veen declaiming her epic haiku cycles at the Disco Biscuit: the vast spoil-heaps of second-hand books in the shop with no name in Oueen's Road: throngs of stylishly wasted Saturday morning floaters in Kensington Gardens; Gary whatsit blowing his looped, Coltraneish scales out of a soprano sax during a downpour in Pavilion Gardens; a wetly grinning mouth in The Mongolian Barbeque saying, "anyone up for a couple more char-grilled infidels, yeh?"

thus, street theatre may provide Brighton Festival's defining moments. Streets of Brighton 98, devised by Zap Productions, will kick-start a national tour of major centres by diverse and dynamic talents. Among the dozens of performers will be Cie Jo Bithume, a massive French troupe who will stage a multi-layered spectacular at Black Rock; Scarebeus, another French group, specialising inethereal street art; and Steve Parry's and Cormac Dorrian's gay exposition. Hedonism.

And so it will come to pass that on 2 May blurred looking one-night standees will wolf their Full Englishes and glance sheepishly at each other through mercifully greasy heat hazes in the tastefully overdecorated dining rooms of Greene Gables or Hamilton's Bide a Wee. Meanwhile, yet another dish - and grande bouffe, at that - will be warming in Mr Barron's cramped festival kitchenette two doors down from the orange trim of Shakies Gill in the Old Steine.

That's right. It's only the Hil Brighton, innit?

Brighton Festival info and boking: 01273 706771; Interu: http://www.brighton-festival.orgk. Brighton & Hove Fringe Fest 4: 01273 673777; Intery: www.brighton.co.uk/frie.

Not that the festival lacks A-list The written word is covered by a lit-glit crew headed by Nick Horned treasure: the Sechuan Peoples Art Theatre, who will premiere Sailing Through Three Gorges. Yet the Brighton Festival hinges on something fundamentally richer than hired guns its own local taland Mr Strachey. ent, often daz-In a typical bit of counterzlingly ephemeral. Exhibit A: Chandalay Quor, a local vocal en-The festival's list of semble led by Juliet Russell and Christian Cotton, which

CHRISTOPHER Frayling. the ebullient rector of the Royal College of Art, was still crowing when I ran across him this week at the poaching of Wendy Dagwortby, head of fashion, at St Martin's College and tutor to Berar-

di, McCartney et al to become

head of fashion at the RCA. The Royal College of Art has been a little peeved for some time over St Martin's pre-eminence in fashion education, and this might presage a change.

There is no contest, however, when it comes to car design. Christopher Frayling tells me that 200 cars since the sixties have been designed by Royal College of Art alum-

I didn't even know there were 200 different models of car. All six members of the design team for the Korean Hyundai car were former RCA students.

I suggested to the RCA rector that he might introduce a radical form of student loan - namely that the college draw up an agreement whereby it has a share in the profits of any design evolved during a student's time there. Mr Frayling seemed rather interested in the idea. Ford, I espect, may be less so.

DAVID LISTER **ARTS**

Culture Secretary Chris

DIARY

Smith is soon to publish a memoir of his first year in office, charting no doubt the rise of Cool Britannia. I hope the book-mentions a small press briefing I attended in his office on Tuesday as it could yet prove to be the moment the government's attempt to be cool and youthful fell flat on its face. One of the policy initiatives Mr Smith told us about was sending "live excerpts from Shakespeare and opera into nightclubs." The RSC said it would expose actors to ridicule. But anyone under 30 would have spotted that the idea was doomed. Nightclubs are expensive places in luxury hotels where Tony Bennett and Shirley Bassey sing. Young people go to clubs.

Damien Hirst saw his medicine cabinet fetch £180,000 at Christie's on Wednesday; but his happiness might have been short-lived if he had peeked at the £10,000 Dictionary Of Art published

by Macmillan on the same day. The 34 volume, leatherbound set took 15 years to compile and is lavish in its attention to modern art, with 4 million words devoted to the 20th century. But when I looked up Hirst in the index I found he merited just one entry, and that was exactly two words: his name in a list of Goldsmith College graduates. Bring back the medicine cabinet. Damlen needs an aspirin.

Lord Archer, producer of Dame Edna Everage's extravaganza, had a puzzling entry in the programme when the show opened at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, on Tuesday. Detailing his long association with the theatre, it chronicled how he "travelled to the Old Vic in Bristol" to watch Peter O'Toole, "as a schoolboy he moved on to Stratford to watch Laurence Olivier." he has "an abiding memory of Edith Evans playing one of her many Queens." But hang on - this is all just watching theatre. It means that I can claim a long association not just with theatre, but with cinema, opera, ballet and football. What renaissance

people we can all be.

about the new Radio 4 schedules, you have to admit that they don't include Week Ending: the mangy old cur has been blundering into the furniture, coughing up hairballs and puking on the carpets for long enough, and somebody has finally decided to take the kindest way. Unfortunately,

WHATEVER else you say

Nicolas Broomfield

the new topical puppy that re-places it, The Beaton Generation (Radio 4, Sunday), isn't properly house-trained and reacts to burglars by showing off its repertoire of tricks - or. to put it more directly, Alastair Beaton and his comedy chums seem more interested in establishing that they know a lot about politics than in actually saying anything amusing or satirical about it. I give it three weeks to get funny, and then I'm shoving it in a

it in a river. I don't give much for its chances, though, while it's being recorded live at Ronnie Scott's club. There are comedies - Old Harry's Game, on Tuesday nights, is one - which can overcome that handicap of a studio audience. But for The Beaton Generation, as for Thursday evening's newcomer, Bussman and Quantick Kingsize, recorded

cardboard box and dumping

ROBERT HANKS THE WEEK

IN RADIO

Originality: Seven Socraments is a dramatic new oratoria by

"live at London's exclusive Imperial Rooms, Mayfair", the combination of disproportionate hilarity and poor sound quality is fatal. The audience reaction to Bussman and Quantick was emphatic enough to make me feel I was being told when to laugh particularly bothersome when, as happened once or twice, more subtle jokes were greeted with uneasy silence. It's hard to avoid the suspicion that the audiences at these venues are a tad too drunk to get the finer points.

But it isn't only in comedy that audiences have made their presence felt. Even The Reith Lectures (Wednesday) have succambed, this year delivered in front of an audience for the first time in history. Actually, as Radio 3's Sounding the Century Lectures showed a few weeks ago, having a speaker talking to real people rather than reading aloud to a microphone can add a helpful dimension

of spontaneity and openness.

In John Keegan's case, it

seems only to emphasise the tension and artificiality of the form (though by now, after three weeks, he seems to he loosening up a little); the sober, overly narrative structure he gives to each lecture adds to that impression, and while he has blocked in some interesting points, the Reith Lectures have rarely felt

two years ago

delivered its

stunning Son-

quite so lecturey. Underlying this new obsession with audiences is a new philosophy that insists Radio 4 needs to make the public feel involved - hence the incessant pleas to members of the public to phone. fax or e-mail their points of view which have suddenly become a feature of Radio 4's day. You could see this as an enhancement of democracy. What gets me is the sheet neediness, the desperate hunger for reassurance that

people are listening. I find myself wanting to phone up James Boyle and tell him, look, I'm not going to call you every day - we both agreed this wasn't a serious relationship, I'm not ready for commitment right

What do you think, readers, should I tell him? On second thoughts, keep it to



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New image: Mad Frankie Fraser is taking over from Lorraine Chase as the face of Campari for the '90s

When adverts mix in the wrong circles

Why should a drink need a convicted killer to assert a 'hard' image?, asks Vanessa Thorpe

WAS Campari ever really considered a "girlic drink"? The advertising agency in charge of resurrecting the brand obviously fears so. Instead of letting what it believes are these harmful associations, linger even a moment longer, it has decided to go all-out for a macho, streetwise image.

As a result the new television advertisement for the Italian aperitif will feature the convicted gangland murderer Mad Frankie Fraser in a cast of similarly rough-

hewn "real" people. They had to go in very hard, the creative directors at advertising agency Mellors Reay argue, if they were ever to dislodge the image of Lorraine Chase from the mind of the drinking public. But many in the industry con-

Mad Frankie claims to have had Campari smuggled into his prison cell

jentious use of Mad Frankie s nothing more than a cynical ploy to maximise pubicity. After all, it is hard to pat a price on a bit of drumhad up controversy.

Mad Frankie himself has dfended his right to appear inhe commercial, claiming. stely with his tongue firmlyn his cheek, that he occasnally had it smuggled into in in prison. Mellors Reay t-are understandably keen tpresent Frankie, a one te intimate of the Kray thers, as a reformed charer. He is now an actor, a tior executive says, and a ind up comedian who sinrely regrets his past, (purularly, no doubt, his 43 ars in prison).

The new commercial tells b story of a burglary and is in the seedy London club. ine. The music is vintage ichael Caine, from the cult vie Get Carter, and the ole emphasis is on brooding violence. Our hero the burglar is first spotted heating a hasty retreat from the home of a wealthy club owner. Part of his loot is a distinctive jacket which he later makes the mistake of wearing into the club owned by his victim. Mad Frankie plays one of the patrons of the club. as does one-time footballer Rodney Marsh and aging

rocker Wee Willie Harris. Tim Mellors, creative director of Mellors Reay. champions the new ad as honest and gritty - a welcome change from the gloss of the

Eighties. "Men won't buy that bullshit anymore," he says, "They are no longer susceptible to such cliched images." But he cannot have it both ways. Either the ad is intended as a knowing and stylish pastiche. or it is "real". Either they are trading on macho glamour or they are kindly helping Mad Frankie to distance himself

from his violent past. John McVicar, the rehahilitated robber turned sociologist, has also been calisted by the agency.

"Critics who get on their high horse over using excriminals like him in advertising need reminding that many criminals do have likeable and even admirable person qualities," he says.

Aside from the questionable ethics of promoting goods through an association with crime, some in the advertising industry believe the new campaign may be a mar-

keting error. Raymond Perrier, of Interbrand Newell Sorrell, says the advert sounds like another example of a drinks company which misjudges

"There are two types of success in the drinks market, there are the flashes in the pan and the long steady brand successes," he explains. Brands of fashionable beer like Sol and Dos Equus have their moment. while other more distinctive drinks build up a loyal group of customers that the manufacturers should nurture."

The assumption is that because the drink is red, men

Being "girlie" is apparently an awful sin, while a drink that is aggressively macho will be drunk by women anyway because they are apparently never put off by a 'tough", male image,

One thing is for certain. while it was possible in the 708 to make the erroneous assumption that Lorraine Chase had "wafted here from Paradise" no one is going to make the same mistake with

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Keeping tabs on the untouchables

Tougher laws are needed to ensure justice against paedophiles isn't carried out by mob rule, writes Roger Dobson

THEY are the outcasts of the late 20th century. Loathed by society, hunted by mobs, and hounded from towns and villages, paedophiles have be-come the modern day untouchables living on or be-

yond the edge of society. Scores of normally peaceful and law abiding communities have taken to the streets this week in demonstrations against abusers found to be living in their midst, protests driven by that volatile mixture of fear and

For convicted paedophiles like Sidney Cooke, who, despite the horrors of their crimes, might once have expected to walk free from iail at the end of their sentences to start new lives, there is now the haunting realization that for the rest of their lives there will be no place to hide, no fresh start.

Like their victims, they will live in fear of the footstep outside the door at night, the unwanted hand on the shoulder. and the knock on the door. For men like Cooke, his accomplice Robert Oliver, and other paedophiles, the clear message from society is that their crimes are unacceptable and that they will not be tolerated.

Of course, paedophiles, or child molesters as they were



once called, have always existed, but society is more aware of them now and more educated about the enormous lifelong harm they cause to young children. Once, the near-universal reaction to children who alleged

Over the last two decades in particular, awareness of child sexual abuse has been etched on the public consciousness by a tidal wave of inquires and investigations into Cleveland, the activities of Frank Beck in Leicestershire, and the North Wales children's homes scandal. There has also been a reluctant but growing realization of the scale of sexual abuse within

abuse was that they were lying.

Not any more.

In community after community and most recently in Bristol and Somerset, the sheer scale and horror of child abuse has led to protests and demonstrations fueled by the apparent impotence of society to find a

way of guaranteeing its children can be protected from offences as yet uncommitted.

Crimes of any kind against vulnerable children have always been deeply offensive, and sexual assaults inspire the most anger. Add to that an apparent inability by those in authority to take action, and the predictable results are demonstrations and protests.

When crowds riot over issues like paedophilia, the anger becomes more intense. "Crowds become very polarized. Individuals within them would never consider doing that kind of thing outside a crowd situation," explains Dr Joanna Adler, forensic psychologist at the University of

"Ask them individually what they would do about it and they might say they will write to their MP, but in a crowd situation they would be banging on police cars, throwing bottles and

so on. Groups become much more extreme and with the diffusion of responsibility, individuals don't take on responsibility for their own

actions. Some measures are planned to tackle the paedophile problems, and under the Sex Offenders Register those considered dangerous can be identified for the safety of the community. But will it work? Will the baying crowd be placated, or will it be further incensed by that sort of information?

"I don't believe community notification can ever work. How can community notification have one iota of an effect". says Dr Ray Wyre, psychologist and international expert on sexual crime. "You are giving information without power, you are giving information which creates fear, and you are giving information that feeds into the motive of offenders



Catalyst: Police were called to calm a riot after the release of Sidney Cooke (above) Photograph: 5WNS

like abductors because they are aroused by creating fear. And what do you expect the community do? They are not going to say, Thanks very much, we'll keep an eye on him', they re going to drive him out or riot." There are doubts too as to whether a sex offender register itself will work. In Los Angeles when a child went missing, the police checked on 3,400 men on the local register of offenders and found that 90 per cent of addresses were inaccurate.

Another problem with public registers and notifications is that they can inspire complacency. Research into Megan's Law in the USA - the first law that required paedophiles to be identified - has shown that many crimes were committed by people not on the lists.

Approaching the problems from the other direction, and is also difficult, because it mostly centres on the offender accepting what he is doing is wrong and being able to stop it.

"Of all sex offenders, fixaled paedophiles are the most likely to abuse again and they can abuse hundreds of children during their criminal careers. A person who has paedophile desires might be able to control his behaviour if he recognizes that the abuse of a child is wrong," says Dr Wyre.

In a debate that is heavy on rhetoric and light on real ideas, Peter Bibby, consultant, author, former deputy director of child care in Barnardos in London, and founder chairman of . the Committee on Child abuse Networks, bas put forward a new idea. He wants to see the development of a life licence for those convicted of the most serious crimes plus a ban on contact with all children for paedophiles like Sidney Cooke

when they are released. "Paedophiles present a continuous danger to children and unless we take serious action. we will continue to leave children at risk. I believe that all those convicted of paedophile offences should be disqualified from contact with children for an unlimited time after conviction," he says.

Making contact with a child an offence in itself would give the police more room to take action before a more serious crime in committed. Such a move might also give fearful parents more reassurance. And it is a move that is not without precedent. After all, as Mr Bibby points out, someone who is cruel to a dog can already not only be jailed, but banned from having a dog for life.

But then, Britain always has trying to treat the paedophile, - had a reputation for looking after its dogs.

A day at the races, and that's just for starters

It's flash, exclusive but most of all it's fun for the 'ladies

Nicole Veash was at the starting line

"WOULD you like a glass of champagne and a few nibbly bits?" Mary Seth-Smith beams from under her red pill-box hat as she takes a glass of pink fizzy stuff.

Racing is just wonderful, wonderful," she says between sips. "It's in the blood you know.

"I've been on racecourses since I was a little thing. My mother was really serious about it and would study the form of horses, while my father would take his lapel pin and just stick it in a racecard. It's mad really, but he always won."

If you are not on the inside, the racing world can be a strange old thing. It's champers and cloth caps; tick-tack gloves and fancy hats. Many of us might have a flutter on the big races, such as the Grand National or Ascot, but it remains a minority spectator sport. And although there are women in racing. like Sue Ellen. the managing director of United Racecourse, Racecourse Association director Morag Gray and trainer Jenny Pitman, its audience remain pre-dominantly male. unlike football, which recently upped its creditability by welcoming hordes of ladette fans.

Until, that is, the launch of Ladies Who Race, a new club providing "social events for discerning ladies". The group pushes the stereotype of wealthy "absolutely dahrrling" women with stacks of free time into a whole new stratosphere. It also proves that class still ex-

There are two types of people at the races. The toffs and those whose idea of a Saturday night is a tour of Romford's pubs. Mary belongs to the former. The 59-year-old, dressed



All a flutter: The excitement mounts for avid race-goer Suzanne Goldklang

in de rigeur home counties tartan, is the widow of racing commentator and author Michael Seth-Smith. After being immersed in the equine world all her life. Mary has opened up her contacts book to provide like-minded ladies with a unique racing service.

"I am passionate about the glamour of racing, the excitement and, of course, the beautiful animals," she says. "The thing I really leve is dressing up. I've got about a dozen hats, probably a few more, but that would sound excessive."

Mary is something of a racing expert. She can spot form, discuss blood lines, makes fluent use of the technical jargon and has a remarkable knack for air-kissing friends without disare two million women out there who, like me, love racing, she says. "When I go to the

"The thing I really love is dressing up. I've got a dozen hats, probably more"

racecourse. I generally know enough people to talk to. But other women may be divorced, widowed, or have a husband tied up with work and no-one

lodging the pill-box. "There to go with. That is where I come

guiness joining fee (£105), entry to the races, luncheons, breakfasts with trainers, stable visits and the option of partowning a race horse are all extra. "A day out will probably cost about £60 and we hope to meet up about twice a month, so it's not cheap," says Mary, blinking her powdery blue cyelids. "I never bet myself, so I don't spend money there, but the club is definitely more of an upper-class thing. People without money generally have to work during the week, you

Mary's club is rather exclusive. Apart from the 100

> ly good yell." Standing next to Suzanne as

Beautifully groomed Fleur

agree with Mary's assessment. 'I just love it," says Fleur resplendent in a dusky gold shirt and fresh ski tan, "because it is so glamorous, especially here in a box. The money side of it is not something I think of, because I only have tiny, little

Hanging over the edge of a grandstand box at Epsom Race course, 36-year-old Suzanne Goldklang, champagne glass in hand, nods in approval. 'It's such wonderful fun," she breathes excitedly. "It doesn't bother me what the weather is like, as long as I can have a jol-

a clutch of thoroughbreds tear past in the 2.35 is testament to Crew, 19, and her mum, Pat. . her lung power. "Come on, 747040

Achilles boy, come on. He's such a beauty, come on you old thing. "I've been racing since [was 18," she says, "and I love the social side of things because everyone is such a sweetie. It is a bit of a man's world, so a day out with a group of girlfriends: would be tremendous fun. If I couldn't go racing ever again there would a major gap in my

In the bookie's bear pit, Fleur ventures past tick-tackmen Rocky and Mickey, to collect her £1.25 winnings from Jolly Joe. It is a moment when racing's two worlds coilide: Jacques Vert's spring range rubbing shoulders with short sleeves and cloth caps.

Ladies Who Race: 01372





acting master of South Durham Hunt and farmer; married with four children

"MY parents were farmers, grandparents were farmers. I've ridden horses and hunted for as long as I can remember. I don't think anyone predicted.

to be. They are largely urban. to be anti-hunting.

We were lucky that Foster's bill was so bloody badly drafted, it was unworkable. They were going on about hunting with dogs: they didn't specify

the landslide victory and quite whether it would be just dogs how arrogant they were going or bitches allowed. With the beef on the bone law, the day It was obvious they were going _ after it was announced, a highranking official said look, we can't enforce this law, it's just

too badly drawn up'. "Farming has taken the biggest bashing under Labour, it's just been one body blow af-

having cigarette sponsorship for motor racing, but eating beef on the bone was a worrying thing that had to stop.

Tony Blair's just a modernday Tory, isn't he. New Labour's policies are very



Samantha Hallimond, 22. Lone parent of Samuel, 4. Yolunteer worker for the Citizens' Advice Bureau

WE'RE Labour supporters. our family, very much so, It was a really big thing for us when they won. I thought they'd get it; there was so much going wrong, so many problems. I think the biggest thing that they've done is the changes to benefits, especially for people like myself, lone parents.

I wasn't too happy about the lone-parent benefit changes. All new claimants can no longer claim the lone-parent bit of child benefit, which is

about £6 a week. It's quite a bit of money that. With the new working family tax credit that's coming in, I think they're doing it to encourage people to be spending time with him. work, especially with the child-

care provision. Personally, I would like to wait until Sam goes to school and then I'd like to find a part-

work full time. I think the first four years of a child's life are very important. You should

to insist t animal ures and rany disproach. that the · was left

npanies

in 1981.

the ren-

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rive. But

culations

normal-

From my point of view the most important thing to tackle is getting single parents out to work, which I think they are trying to do by cutting benefits.

Is he still their local hero?



Tony Blair said things could only get better.

But how has his performance gone down in his own backyard of Sedgefield 5. C Interviews and portraits by Sarah Bancroft

starter!



Rachel Dawson, 40, four children; married ló years to Chris, 48. Lives on a 380-acre farm

On election night I sat up and watched for so long, then I realised they were going to get in and went to bed:

much from the farming as Tecally himself in touch from the hunting point of with the people. I don't know view, which was a huge worry whether he is or not ... I'm not our income is derived from the Royal Family or things like hunting But I don't think Dr that Ethnik it would be a Cumingham (the agriculture great shame to do away with ministral like and large of farm. minister) has any love of farm-

es Hesso afrogant He's trying to do to the farmer per-lians what the Conservatives did to the inners. T can't say that I'm a Tony

Blair Tan except that he's very very enthusiastic and he's changed his view on a lot of things. I think welfare re-I was horrified, complete formula probably necessary.

by gutted, I knew the election someone make got to take it by would affect our family, not as the scrutt of the neck.

because the main source of sure that I like the reform of



Nora Robinson, 81; retired nurse; 2 southerner, she moved to her late husband's native North; two children

WELL, we had the Conservatives for 18 years and then we higgest shock because, of course, he came to promi-Labour got in last year, I ment, Churchill. Attlee-then time, I wondered, is he expe-

suddenly after all that time, a Oh, I liked John Major, I respected him, but the jubilation

that was here in this village was nobody's husiness. Well, because he comes here, you see. He comes up the back of my had Tony Blair. It was the house to the Trimdon Labour Club]. You know they put up all the gadgets up, the televinence in this area. When sion and the security (for the election). I feel, well it's a thought, well, I've had all change, we'll see if a broom kinds - a wartime govern- will sweep clean. At the same

rienced enough? Because that's the ultimate goal of any man in this country, to be Prime Minister, isn't it? Now he's got it and he's got to hold all the people together.

"I've got a bee in my bonnet about Frank Dobson: he doesn't know enough about nursing and health. Our health service is still the most precious thing we have after education. Education is first because that's the future. But our health service, no matter what they say about it, is there

"I wish this government would leave school teachers alone. The majority of them know how to teach, they know children better than what

members of parliament do. "I would do something about the drug thing up here. It's like every other town and city and its villages now. Tony Blair has three children ... I do think he's very aware of it and I suppose he's like most parents, he'll do his best for his



Joe Pearce, 55, ex-wages clerk for British Rail for 22 years. Married with three children

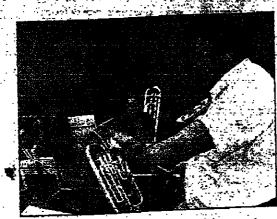
"The Tories had completely lost their way. There was that much in-fighting. I began to realise the astuteness of Maggie Thatcher - she knew that people were greedy - but she sold us a pup when she told us it

would be a trickle-down ... "It's like your local team winning. There was just a feeling that people were happy. I knew that reality would soon strike through, but it was nice to watch. I think Blair has tundamental socialist views, but

he's not the rough type, like-Kinnock or Prescott, but you need these guys - they're statesmen.

For the last 10 years I've been in and out of work. I've laboured, been down in London humping furniture ... Now I'm a care worker: I'm only guaranteed 12.5 hours. but it fluctuates between 30 28 hours, so I have to live wi that. But if the country ge wealthy. I want to go with

"This last thing with the s gle parents. I think they ha dled that a wee bit cavalies frightened me that it could that way. And the disable thing, it has to be watched



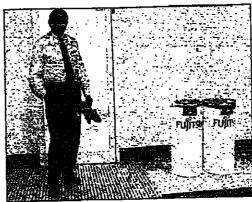
George Lundberg, 50; headmaster of St John's C of E primary school in Shildon; married with three daughters. -

"I FEARED for society if Labour didn't win. I watched the election results last year with a bottle of Scotch. The sense of relief the day after! I thought Labour would bring a whole new aspect

to society "But I was appalled about the university grant system, it's send-

ing the wrong signals. They're saving you've got to put something into it to appreciate it. I still believe it's a right. And, like every school, we were given £1,000 to spend on books: the little school in the Wear valley with 19 pupils got £1,000, just as we did with 296 pupils. "There is still tremendous de-

spair in the teaching profession. The ray of light is not as big as it was, but I still have a vision that things are going to get better."



Len Davies, personnel director at Fujitsu. Married with two sons

AS FAR as Labour's 12 months go, the recognition that the skills base in the UK is insufficient to make this country really strong is important. The schools taskforce under David Blunkett will hopefully bring more understanding of where the deficiencies are, because it starts long before university, with the

10- and 12-year-olds.

The danger is that there are to many initiatives. But if the des to change is sustained, to imp skills and education, the num and literacy of the population which is quite appalling, that have an effect. Not in the im are future. But it's encourage that it isn't just short-termist foundations had been allowed

The New Deal is another tive move. Trying to put the ethic back into society.

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Foreseeing the present

FUTUROLOGY is an idea whose time has still, it seems, not yet arrived. It has always been easy to predict - and ridicule - ball-gazers because so much of their vision is constrained by the thinking of the times and extrapolations of existing trends and technologies. Futurology is an interesting guide, but a guide to the present, its fantasies and its discontents. We never did progress to individual hover-cars or those space-age unisex bodysuits advertised in Sixties comics.

The new report by the Henley Centre on life in Britain in the year 2020 is a good example of the limitations of futurology. It has been sponsored by the life insurance arm of Barclays Bank (geddit?), so it was thoroughly predictable that they would take the mickey out of Karl Marx's belief that "the fall of capitalism and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable". Like Marxism, though, the Henley Centre is very much a creature of its time. We live in a nostalgic age and this report is a piece of retro-futurology - a typical 1990s piece of recycled timidity. Why, for example, didn't we get more of a feel for the future of the great issue of our times than this passage, which makes Gordon Brown sound like

"It would be foolish to rule out the possibility that the EU will succeed in introducing a single currency and that this will lead to a federal United States of Europe. However, obstacles in the path of deeper union are formidable, and a wide range of possible scenarios exist. There are competing nationalist and internationalist forces, and costs and benefits, both in the long and the short terms."

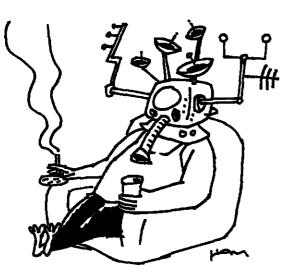
No point in rushing down to the bookies with that one, then.

Futurology was not always as tepid or hedged about as this. George Orwell created his terrifying vision of life in 1984 in 1948, at the most difficult point in the Cold War and when state control of just about everything was taken to be the natural course of events. There was a Ministry of Information during the war so a Ministry of Truth was not such a big mental leap. Before Orwell, other writers such as Aldous Huxley had projected their present concerns into the future.

Huxley found himself living in a world of rapid automation, industrial giantism and totalitarian regimes. At this distance it is quite easy to see that the Brave New World was the 1930s, only more so. In the 7th century AF (after Ford) we find the class system has mutated into a world of rigid castes where human beings are graded from highest intellectuals to lowest manual workers. The inhabitants of the brave new world are hatched from incubators and are conditioned to accept their social destiny, all run, of course, by a world dictator called Mustapha Mond. This was the age of Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini, and of eugenics.

There were plenty of left-wing intellectuals in the 1930s who were inspired by the Soviet Union. Like Stdney and Beatrice Webb they saw this future and thought that it worked. The Fabian socialist H G Wells didn't think that capitalism would evolve too happily. In The Time Machine he takes us to the year 802701, where the divisions between classes have gone beyond the world of the social scientist or even Huxley's castes and have just about evolved into separate species, the peaceful but rather lazy Eloi (the bosses) and the underground savage race of primitives, the Morlocks (the workers). Capitalism was going to do that to us. Then too, on a more humdrum note, the widespread adoption of the electric vacuum-cleaner led us to believe that we would in time see the end of household labour, with friendly robots doing those dull chores.

So what about 1998? The Henley Centre says relatively little about class, or state control, and has no nightmares to scare us with - for which, much thanks. On technology, they have gone a bit retro, claiming that domes-



tic chores will soon be delegated to robots such as vacuum cleaners programmed to whire into action when dust reaches a set level, while remote systems will enable us to turn up the central heating or turn on the cooker from outside the home. But you could have seen much the same at the 1939 World's Fair in New York.

The Henley Centre also foresees a revolution in transport. Surprise, surprise. In 2020, wealthy people will be able to criss-cross the globe in record time by using space shuttles to travel outside the world's atmosphere, thus cutting the journey time to Sydney to just two hours. The rest of us get to use solar-powered cars or travel on "superconductive magnetic levitation" trains capable of travelling at 350mph. This is an old trick. In the Victorian era you could shock an audience by suggesting that the day would come when men could travel at 100mph. Supertrains were being dreamt up in the 1940s whilst anyone with an old kids' annual from the 1950s won't have to look far to find jet-turbine powered supercars with bubbly tops. Again very much a product of their time, when diesel electric trains became "streamlined" and cars sprouted fins and wings and styling that draw heavily on the revolution already happening in the air. And indeed their predictions about speed of travel came true so that nowadays most family cars could outstrip the racing cars that Stirling Moss drove at Le Mans. Yes, it is a fairly safe bet that we'll be going faster in twenty

There are plenty of other examples of how the dottiest of futurology can be rationalised simply by reference to the time of its creation. Mass unemployment gave us our obsession with the problems of managing the "leisure revolution" which never quite seems (have you noticed?) to arrive. The sexual obsession of the 1970s were easily transmuted into Woody Allen's orgasmatron that was such a boon to the character in his film who wakes up after two centuries of cryogenic preservation. (She: "You haven't had sex in 200 years?" He: "204 if you count my marriage"). The Victorians were into exploring new continents so Jules Verne wrote about exploring the centre of the earth. Modern worries about environmental degradation and the collapse of law and order gave us Mad Max, Bladenumer and

Is futurology bunk? It is certainly persistent bunk. It is not only actuaries who have had always had a fascination for the future. This quasi-science has a longer history than our little survey might suggest. From the Old Testament prophets, through the Oracle of Delphi and Nostradamus to the novelists and film-makers of the last hundred years we have demonstrated a vigorous appetite for it. But futurology is also, as we hope we have shown, great fun. It only gets dangerous if, like weathermen or politicians, we take it too seriously. We should accept that it tells us more about our present than our future or our children's.

Our messed-up world

THOSE WHO enjoy the cut and thrust of politics but care little about what sort of world we're creating will revel in the discomfiture of Messrs Blair and Cunningham over radioactive waste and beef on the bone. However, they were only trying to tidy up a mess that should never have been created in the first place.

The real concern is that there is no reason to believe that such messes, and worse, will not be repeated in the future.

When you go against nature and common sense, propagating toxic substances that neither man nor nature can process safely, what else can you expect? Whether BSE was caused by making cows eat dead sheep or by marinading them in organophosphates, it doesn't take an advisory panel to figure out that the result won't be too nutritious. When you create enough radioactivity to kill millions of people, don't be surprised if you succeed. Even now genetic enneers are unleashing all sorts of grotesque perversion onto us.

The common theme is that greedy commerce and mercenary, microscope-minded boffins are being allowed to operate as if the consequences of their actions took place in some dimension which did not poison the rest of us.

To paraphrase Einstein, "A clever man gets out of situations a wise man would have avoided in the first place." I don't mind if Tony and Jack aren't too clever. I just hope that in the long term they'll prove to be wise. JOHN PATTERSON London SW5

YOUR REPORTS on nuclear waste (22, 23 April) raise several important questions. However, the main problem appears to be that the nuclear countries still have not solved their waste disposal problems. There are no solutions yet for the disposal of spent fuel and old power plants.

This may well be a reflection of the dramatic decrease in spending on nuclear research and development by governments since the early 1980s. It has to be asked whether the more than \$5bn that governments spent on nuclear R&D in 1996 are either not enough or whether the funds have been channelled in the wrong direction. Are scientists conducting the wrong kind of research? DT KIRSTEN BINDEMANN Research Fellow

Oxford Institute for Energy Studies

THE disastrous emergence of an- both parents display greater trust in fibiotic-resistant bacteria is partly due their son. They should demonstrate to the routine administration of an- a belief that their son is a rational tibiotics to farm animals ("March of being, able to differentiate computthe superbugs", 24 April). Since this er game "action" from life. is money-driven, it will never stop unless governments world-wide cooperate to bring it about by legislation. Furthermore and most ominously, the antibiotics are present in the milk as well as the meat; apart from becoming vegans, therefore, the only way for humans to avoid barbouring resistant bacteria (to say nothing of developing ever more frequent virus diseases, many of them untreatable) is to buy organic milk and meat.

Organic farmers do manage to survive in this very competitive world of agriculture without feeding their stock on daily doses of antibiotics but their produce costs us more, of course. If we are all to stop swallowing daily doses of antibiotic the Government must provide financial support for these dedicated farmers. Others would then join them and their untainted products would be cheaper. Dr H C GRANT London NW3

It's only a game

JOHN O'BYRNE (letter, 21 April) questions whether he should "exercise his parental responsibilities" and ban his son from playing violent computer games.

As a young man I, and many of my friends, have enjoyed playing computer games for many years and remain relatively free of bomicidal or antisocial urges. I suspect that Mr O'Byrne's son has many friends who also own computers and any ban could quite easily be circumvented.

I would strongly recommend that

'In You All Creation Exults', an icon of the Virgin and Child from Moscow in the current Royal Academy exhibition - see letters on the right

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Post letters to Letters to the Editor and include a daytime telephone number Fax 0171 293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

London SE16

LISA DONOVAN (letter, 17 April) points out that children have been playing games involving swords, guns and other weapons for ever. However, these are about imagining the boy next door is the enemy solbe rescued. The drama has to be cre-

ated by a child's own thoughts. The threat from computer games is that the game is based on the imagination of much older people. This means children are absorbing a more sophisticated level of violence while at the same time suppressing development of their own initiative and creativity. SILVIA GAUNT

Twickenham, Middlesex

Interview with O

YOUR REPORT "BBC defends £10,000 payment to O J Simpson, but pulls interview after protests" (20 April) is adrift from the facts.

You state that Ruby Wax Meets OI was pulled off air after a week of "negative publicity". The decision to reschedule the programme from its regular slot on Sunday at 10pm to Wednesday 29 April at 10.05pm was made over two weeks ago because a new drama serial beginning dier, and your dad is the hostage to on Sunday night would have meant the O J Simpson interview starting much later than the established

time slot for Ruby Wax's series. The Rev Graham Stevens, of the National Viewers and Listeners Association, who is quoted in your piece, has not seen the programme. His assumption that the BBC is going to "make fun of these deaths" is completely unfounded, as is his questioning of the use of "a come-

though Miss Wax is a talented comedy performer, she is also an experienced and probing interviewer. PAUL JACKSON Controller of BBC Entertail BBC Production

London W12

MPs welcome here CONTRARY to your views about Labour's "voter contact" (leading article, 22 April), I welcome the opportunity to encounter my Labour MP in the flesh. I complained to our Labour MP's representative last year that the only time they bothered to visit us was when grovelling for votes two desperate weeks before an election.

MPs should consider these visits primarily as local opinion and data gathering missions, and secondly as marketing opportunities; listening, not preaching. It's extraordinary that any MP could object to the idea. MADELEINE NEAVE dian" to interview Simpson. Al- London SW15

icons of a life of prayer

TOM LUBBOCK'S review of the Art of Holy Russia exhibition (21 May, see picture left) offers some interesting comparisons between the theologies and church arts of East

Mr Lubbock describes the impact of icons as arising in part from "the intellectual life of theology". Orthodox theologians would be less happy with the term "intellectual" than most of their Western counterparts. For the Orthodox theology arises principally - even solely from the life of prayer rather than from intellectual debate.

Mr Lubbock's assertion that the icon depicting the Harrowing of Hell displays a better theology than the Western tradition begs more questions than he is able to address in a brief comment on one icon among many. To suggest that the Western tradition (with, for example, the amazing fresco of the descent to the dead by Fra Angelico in Florence's Museo di San Marco) is inferior, because it portrays Christ in close contact with hell rather than remote from it, is naive.

Part of the response of German theology to the Holocaust arises from the premise that God cannot keep at a safe distance from the fight with what is evil. Like us, maybe God has to get dirty if the world is to be saved. It may be that this is bad theology. But those who propound it do so from a belief that a theology which talks about God as separated from and uninvolved in the world is less helpful both to the intellect and to the life of prayer than a theology of engagement.

The Rev Dr PAUL SHEPPY Barnoldswick, Lancashire

TOM LUBBOCK poses the question: what makes Andrei Rublev so good? To answer such a question we must first be inside the mind of the icon painter at the beginning of the 15th century during a revival of esoteric, Hellenistic ideas heavily influenced by a long tradition from Pythagoras to the Philokalia.

This is a mind which makes a clear distinction between the illusion of the physical world and the true spiritual world. To concentrate on seeing this inner world the artist must first achieve silence in the Hesychastic tradition. This is a similar inner silence to that which has to be achieved by Buddhist monks.

Once this is achieved the painter is gnostic and what he paints is not a mere imaginary image but something he has seen. No wonder then to the Western European mind icons seem limited in their expression of movement!

Whilst early Russian icons do indeed come "from life", they come from a different perception of the nature of life than early Florentine art and use different symbolic means to express themselves, such as the Platonic cave and feet raised from the ground. If there is a fault with the current Royal Academy exhibition, it is that it avoids delving into this esoteric symbolism. SIMON JOHN KYTE

Bristol repented

London SE4

YOUR article on the television series A Respectable Trade (18 April) presents the view that Bristol has difficulty in accepting its role in the slave trade. I was born and raised in Bristol and was taught, in considerable detail, at primary school about Bristol's part in the slave trade. And I was also taught that the anti-slavery movement gained rapid support in Bristol, especially among the Methodist and Quaker sections of the population. STEVE MARRIOTT

Longworth, Oxfordshire

Bible backs lesbians

LESBIANS everywhere will want to thank Craig Anderson (letter, 23 April) for drawing their attention to the remarkable biblical injunction: "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman" (Leviticus 18:22). Unless, of course, we are to take it that God only speaks to men. JOHN WATERMAN Orpington, Kent

QUOTE UNQUOTE

instrument. No one chooses this work. You have to how much my socks cost as I didn't know"-The Duke be chosen by God" - Eileen Drewery, the faith healer asked to help England win the World Cup

"Why can't this century end right now? Why can't we call it quits? You know, push a button and agree to go on to the next century? I'm tired of this one" -Douglas Coupland, best-selling outhor of Generation X

"In place of the Thatcherite cold shower, it offers a warm bath" - David Marquand, professor of politics, and former Labour and SDP MP, on the first anniversary of the Blair government

"I have a one-to-one relationship with God. I am God's "I was embarrassed recently when someone asked me of Devonshire, the multi-millionaire

> "Honey, it costs a lot of money to look this cheap" - Dolly Parton's words about her rhinestone-encrusted frock, requoted in reference to the Lard Chancellor's £600,000 refurbishment of his apartment

> "With a legal touch like that, it is no wonder that you gave up the Bar for politics, unlike the Minister for Agriculture, Jack Cunningham, who sometimes gives up politics for the bar" - William Hague, in exchanges with Tany Blair about the beef-on-the-bone ban

LETTER from THE EDITOR

WHENEVER there seems to be a rather thin news list, we have a tradition at The Independent of making some news ourselves. I don't mean making it up, just getting ourselves taken over, or hurling an editor or two out of the tower to keep the chattering classes happy. We could put in on the masthead: The newspaper that makes the news". So it's been Marr out, Rosie Boycott in, Mirror Group out, Mart in ... And now it's happened again - dull week on the media front, what to do? oh well then, Boycott out,

Seriously, though, when I was dismissed in January after an argument (about budgets) with the then owners, many of you wrote to me privately, complaining that the incident and my career had been air-brushed out of the paper in an almost Stalinist way. What had been going on, you asked. Why weren't we told? Had they got something to hide?

You had a point, I thought. You can't be a pro-openness newspaper and then, the minute your own affairs are under scrutiny, go all coy. We have a straight story, therefore, on page This time, the departing editor hasn't been sacked. So what happened, you may ask, to the Marr-Boycott "dream team"? cannabis? Some kind of Marrist revenge?

None of that. We certainly have disagreed not only about directing editorial policy, and taking an overview of the paper, drugs but also about how forthright the daily newspaper should be in expressing its views on the subject. But that wasn't really the issue: I don't respect journalists who can't argue or stand up for themselves and I'd hate to work on a newspaper where disagreements didn't happen. On most things we agreed and we got on perfectly well. Rosie wasn't driven out. She decided that she wanted to work on a mid-market tabloid and that's a perfectly reasonable ambition.

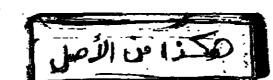
So what now? By far the most important thing is that for the first time in the paper's history we are secure, and stable, working inside a big, liberal-minded company - one which not only makes profits but believes in independent journalism. For most of my time at The Independent, which spans eight years out of eleven, we have been living with stories about our possible demise, takeover or what have you. Now that's all gone and, like most of my colleagues, I haven't really got used to it yet - it is like the sudden disappearance of a kind of daily pain one had almost become used to. Readers will see a series of changes in the months ahead which will show quite clear-Was it a ferocious row? Was it our disagreement over by an intelligent paper moving upmarket and expanding too. Speaking personally, I'm going to remain as editor in chief,

as well as writing. I tend to sit, looking portly, with my fingertips pressed lightly together and an expression of remarkable wisdom on my face. I've agreed to take over as daily editor as well, but only for a short time while new executives are recruited. Excellent people are lining up and a new editor will be appointed soon. Then I will float gently upwards, returning to a realm of pure and rarified contemplative bliss.

IVE SPENT a lot of time reading best-sellers while trying to prepare a speech for the Booksellers' Association next week. As I swing from tube straps deep in Louis de Bernières or the new life of Thomas More, my overwhelming impression is that the reading public is trading up - that best-seller lists are fuller of intelligence and good prose than they were in the Eighties. My colleague Boyd Tonkin, our literary editor, who is writing opposite, confirms this. So the question for broadsheets is: if people are trading up in books why should we think they desperately want to dumb down as soon as they get to their newspaper? They don't: and we intend to prove it.

ANDREW MARR





I'm told the Tories are in need of a little help. Allow me ...



DAVID **AARONOVITCH** RENAMES THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

HAVING received no support whatsoever in my campaign to become the Labour nominee for Mayor of London (see last week's article). I am switching my attention to the Conservatives. Mr Blair's party can - for the time being at least afford to ignore the talent that exists on the fringe of conventional politics. The Tories, by contrast, cannot.

Besides, Mr William Hague and I share some valuable common insights. He practices transcendental meditation and I am a Zoroastrian; he was president of the Oxford Union, and I served as president of the National Union of Students: he spoke at the Conservative Party conference when he was 16, and I was an active member of the School Council. Most important, both of us have failed to make quite the impact on the national

predicted for us. To do us justice, these relative failures are not really our faults. William had no alternative but to accept the job of Welsh secretary when it was offered to him by John Major, and it has been hard for me to live down the malicious "Aaronovitch in bed with quins: two of them men" headlines from 1989. But our destinies are now in our own hands, and - if we work together - I am sure that we can both triumph.

political scene that our-contemporaries

As a token of my good faith - and by way of an example of what Mr Hague might expect, were he to endorse my candidacy - I would like to offer him some thoughts on what might be done to make his party once more the mighty force that once it was in British politics.

Let us deal with this in three broad sections: the scale of the problem: reshuffling, rebranding. The first area is uncontroversial and may be summarised. thus: everyone hates the Conservatives. Conservatives hate the Conservatives. Newborn infants hate the Conservatives. At the merest hint of a Tory canvasser

whole neighbourhoods of dogs begin to waif and garden snails crawl back into their shells. Tories are seen as corrupt, boring, outdated and sexually predatory (it was mainly in reaction to this last perception that Mr Hague was elected eader last summer). 💎

It must be obvious from the above that a reshuffle will not, of itself, solve the problem. Consider the following names: Michael Howard, Sir Brian Mawhinney, Stephen Dorrell, John Maples, Nigel Evans, Michael Jack, James Arbuthnot and - of course - Cecil Parkinson and Sir Norman Fowler. Shut your eyes and repeat it aloud to yourself now - Sir Norman Fowler. The very name defies rebranding (unless you were planning to start up a Thin and Evasive Party). So, though it hurts to say it, Mr Hague must sack every single one of his shadow cabinet and start again. Young Turks like David Willetts, John Whittingdale and Kemal Dengiz should be given the top jobs at once.

That, however, is the easy bit. It has been mooted this week that Mr Hague (though, naturally, he denies it) is now considering the far more radical option of changing the party's name, Naturally, many of the more nostalgic Conservatives will find this a difficult notion to swallow. But swallow it they must. Otherwise the Tories will go into the next election as the only major party that has not changed its name in the last decade. The Liberals became the Liberal Democrats, making it clear that they would only be as liberal as voters wanted them to be, and Labour, famously, metamorphosed from socialist to "Third Way" (a Buddhist notion, I believe) under the purple banner of "New Labour".

Now it's the Tories' turn. But what should they choose? There are a number of off-the-shelf options that they might like to try, but none of them seem quite right to me. "Progressive" sounds like a huilding society; "People's" has been commandeered - and probably copyrighted - by Mr Blair; "Unionist" is hard to explain, and will remind voters of Northern Ireland; "Radical" is a bit frightening and minority - like monkey's brains or anal sex; "Monarchist" is risky while Charles is still beir to the throne; Taxpayers" leaves out bousewives.

My inclination, therefore, is to go for something entirely novel. Which leaves us free to ask the fundamental question. what do the British people really want? We know that, as a nation, we are suspended between the old and the new, between a love of our history and our institutions on the one hand, and a desire not be completely left behind by the rest of the world on the other. Mr Blair's genius was to come up with the formulation for New Labour, "traditional values in a modern setting."

But there is an ace that beats Mr Blair's king. It is evident in the stones of our ancient monuments, in the way the spires of our great cathedrals touch the sky, in the queues outside Madame Tussauds. It is manifest in the membership of the National Trust, of English Heritage. It is incarnated in the sales figures of the Past Times catalogue.

Let me unveil then, the New Heritage Party, with the far more potent slogan, "modern values in a traditional serting." The symbol is the go-ahead businesswoman answering her mobile phone under the dome of St Paul's. It is William Hague standing on the battlements of Windsor Castle, sending a fax to Taiwan. It is "Rule Britannia" recorded by Prodigy. It is King William V. It is the future.

Sometimes it is right to sacrifice animals for our own well-being



PHILIPS

ON ANIMAL **EXPERIMENTS**

IS THE FACT that my octogenarian mother might have the pleasure of seeing her second great-grandchild with her own eyes more important than the pain and distress caused by the experiments on animals that could lead to a treatment that would save her sight? The cost isn't just financial; it involves the cruelty done to millions of albino rabbits who have irritants deliberately dropped into their eyes as part of the research that may allow the elderly to keep seeing just a little longer.

Today is World Lab Animal Day, and I want you to stand in front of the mirror and say to yourself that the question doesn't matter. You'd like to, wouldn't you? After all it's really up to boffins to tell us the best thing to do here. As with many other key decisions of our time, BSE for example, we wave our hands despairingly at the men in white coats, and declare that it's all too difficult to for ordinary mortals to handle.

Well, it isn't. It's very simple really. You have to decide what matters most. I will admit that it would not distress me for a second if I never saw another snake, rat or mouse in my life. I dislike them and they me. But even if you discount them, there are all sorts of animals used in scientific experimentation, and many of them are of the cuddly variety - monkeys, dogs, cats, and of course sheep, such as Dolly, who famously was created in a laboratory.

There are 2.7 million animals used in laboratory work every year in the UK. In the US, more than five million animals die each year as a result of socalled "lethal dose" tests. Their deaths are not accidental. The lethal dose procedure was devised to determine what amount of a substance would kill a given percentage of a sample of animals. Thus the test which has been used for most of this century, the LD50, or lethal dose 50, simply continues feeding poison to animals until 50 per cent die. And, sadly, the animals do not simply lie down and pass quietly away. They die painfully and distressingly.

None of this is any fun for the laboratory workers. If they



didn't have to do it, they wouldn't. Dozens of companies now contribute money to charities dedicated to finding alternatives to testing on animals. This is partly because they believe in the cause; but it is probably also due to the fact that increasingly, consumers are asking awkward questions about the products they are buying, and there is nothing more likely to turn off a British

most extreme around - of using animals in their research. So far, so noble. We can all agree that no living thing should be put through one nanosecond

of distress in testing anything as repulsive as a eigarette or as trivial as cosmetic products. But what about granny's evesight? And even if we don't regard perfume as necessary, what about makeup for people who suffer from severe disfigurement

mand for laboratory animals. No way. There is no sign in a slackening of the demand for. say, specially bred white mice. In fact, the people who breed these things say that not only do they need to supply more, but they are having to provide specialist varieties for new and exotic uses, such as genetic engineering and testing ground breaking surgical techniques.

We could continue to be-

and me, that's who. Most of us want to be reassured about the safety of the soap that our children use. If we aren't we won't buy it. On the other hand, not enough of us will pay the extramargin that would make other ways of testing economic.

Scientists who are working in medical research are at the centre of the controversy, Ironically, it is the men and women who turn down lucrative approaches from drugs companies on the grounds that they do not want their research compromised who often become the objects of attack by the wilder fringes of the animal welfare movement. Their argument is that if they could find easier. quicker ways of saving human beings from the effects of disease, ageing or contagion, they would do so. But which of us. told that our son or daughter has been diagnosed with cancer, would say "save the bunny rabbit, sod the chiid"?

World Lab Animal Day should be an opportunity for as to insist that animals are to the ed as humanely as possible, that we try hard to find alternatives to their use in experiments and that we do as little testing as is necessary. But let this be one more nail in the cotfin of public hypocrisy. We love animals; but we love ourselves

Scientists are at the heart of the controversy but which of us, told that our son or daughter has been diagnosed with cancer, would say "save the bunny rabbit, sod the child"?

consumer than any hint of cru-

imal testing in this field; sooner rather than later we can expect to see a more complete labelling of proprietary drugs. and I should not be surprised if one day all household products will be required to carry a disclaimer stating that they have not been tested on animals. That doesn't even touch the vast range of other products made by companies engaged in animal testing. For example, it surprised me to learn that the makers of Post-Its and of Parker pens are both accused by the American organisation People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals - by no means the

singer Michael Jackson - the chance to use safe makeup rather than be hidden away at home because of the embarrassment of having blotchy skin?

There is little doubt that

huge advances are being made in finding alternatives to animal testing. New techniques allow for testing on dead animals, or on tissue cultures; there are advances in the use of corneas from eye banks, and the ubiquitous computer model is now offering scientists a reliable tool for testing innovative products without using animals. So, in theory, there should be a steady reduction in the de-

which, if not hidden, can end up moan the fate of laboratory anblighting their lives. Would we imals, while blithely accepting The buyers of cosmetics are deny someone with vitiligo - the the benefits of their sacrifice. Or well aware of the history of an-condition said to afflict the we could say that we won't use the products of companies that carry out animal tests at all. The third so-called option, promoted by outfits dedicated to finding alternatives, is in reality an acceptance that animal testing is necessary for the time being. So what should we do?

We should note, firstly. where the pressure for all this testing is coming from. From you

more, and we should admit it,

Why New Labour is in search of an ideology



TONKIN

THE MARXISTS OF YESTERYEAR

EARLY in 1969, the young president of the Government Association at Wellesley College in New England addressed her fellow students with a rousing call to militancy. "For too long, those who have led us have viewed politics as the art of the possible, she thundered. Now, it was time to ask for more. much more: "As the French students wrote on the walls of the Sorbonne: Be realistic! Demand the impossible!" We cannot settle for less."

Stirring stuff. But did Hillary Rodham (not yet Clinton) settle for less on the come to her mic as America's Fast Lady? As we approach the 30th anniversary of those mythical "events" of May 1968, the usual indement

....

on the fire-raisers of that briefly explosive time runs like this. Their rhetoric crashed headlong into the solid walls of social control in parliaments and bureaucracies - barriers much harder to pass than mere riotshields. But, since the young rebels were bursting with energy and ambition, they discarded their denims, donned ues or twin-sets, and found a respectable entry through the front door instead. Pragmatism supplanted ide-

ology. The long march through the institutions began in earnest. Ms Rodham grew up into the cautiously reforming power behind the White House throne. Brazil's revolutionary Marxist thinker, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, matured into a neo-liberal, market-minded president much appreciated by the World Bank. As for that dangerous subversive who edited a book called Red Scotland in 1975; well, the current Chancellor's fiscal rectitude makes Ken Clarke look like Daniel

Cohn-Bendit. So goes the orthodox assessment. Yet it tells only half a trath. As the post-1968 generation swam into the mainstream, the ghosts of their ideological past floated quietly into the state machine. This is not to claim that the centrist. faintly social-democratic regimes who now hold the reins in London, Washington or

Rome are secret radicals hiding their dynamite under a smart suit and a soundbite. What you see, with Blair or Bill. is really what you get. No: the real legacy of '68 lies in a hunger for the "project", the mission, the philosophical system that opens an umbrella of coherence over the zigzag turns of normal politics. Hence the "Third Way" re-

cently sketched by Robin Cook and Jack Straw. It arrives as the latest in a series of bids to brand New Labour as the pardirector of the London School of Economics, he seems to be edging towards an unofficial post as Court Philosopher. Elsewhere, Blair has used his

ed models of change. Now the

powers of patronage to install the great Bengali-born economist-turned-ethical theorist Amartva Sen as Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, Here is an administration that truly cares about its intellectual bona fides. In comparison, Margaret Thatcher's sporadic visits to the Conservative Philosophy

The real legacy of '68 lies in a hunger for the 'project', hence the Third Way

ty of New Theory as well. Will Hutton's stakeholding and Amitai Etzioni's communitarianism evidently failed to make the grade. Yet the longing for a Big Picture ineradicably persists.

When the prime minister visited Washington for his his recent White House love-in, he took along one adviser who perfectly embodies this continuity between seminar-room and statecraft. From the 1960s onwards, Anthony Giddens led the way among British social scientists in building sophisticalGroup were just another of those cruel flirtations with which she used to raise the hopes and break the hearts of impressionable right-wing dons. From some angles, Labour's

new-found interest in high theory looks strange. Notoriously. the party never had much time for its own philosophers. For a start, the pointy-headed tendency leant (as in Harold Laski's case) much too far left for the leadership's taste. Attitudes to non-party thinkers were even more dismissive. In the 1960s. Harold Wilson never talked to

the New Left cohort of rising intellectual stars, such as Stuart Hall and E P Thompson. His idea of a distinguished mind was Arnold Goodman. Now academics tirelessly

announce the expiry of the "grand narratives" that have driven western thought since the storming of the Bastille. But with Blair entering Year Two. it looks as if the death certificates might turn out to be a littie premature. What, for example, is the "Third Way" but another search for the royal road to an intellectual masterplan? Even its title carries echoes of the classic Hegelian synthesis of opposites.

I detect an influence at work that may, at first blush, look shockingly unlikely. To explain it, we need to invoke the playfully pervasive guru of 1968: Jacques Derrida. In one of his best books, the riddling philosopher explores the "spectres" of Marx: the ghostly after-life that the Big Bearded One still enjoys even if everyone proclaims

Marxism to be stone dead. Remember that the first realistic blueprints for a renewed "popular front" led from the left emerged in the Thatcher years not from Labour's home-grown radicals, but from reform-Marxists or ex-Marxists in the Eric Hobsbawm mould. They surfaced during that strange period when the leaders of the Communist Party of Great modern than that.

Britain and Marxism Today stood well to the right of Labour constituency parties. Yes, the folks involved had long since dumped their faith in dialectical materialism, the vanguard party and the rest of it. What survived was a pattern-seeking, system-building cast of thought - and a passion for the "postpolitical politics of everyday life - that brought something tresh to the emerging matrix of New Labour ideas.

Look to the Demos crew captained by Geoff Mulgan (an adviser to Gordon Brown) for a perfect illustration of the style. Demos can trumpet that it stands "beyond left and right" until the olives in Granita shrivel and the Perrier goes flat. Yet the whole project bears an unmissable post-Marxist stamp that might bring a spectral smile to old Karl's whiskery To repeat: the Blair strate-

gy has no hidden radical agenda. The Third Way will lead reliably down the middle of the road. What is new, and unimaginable without 1968, is this government's helief that progmatism cannot justify itself. Even the art of the possible must dress itself up as an idealist's abstract dream. New Labour seeks an overarching theory to explain its not having an overarching theory. And you can't get much more post-



any disthat the red to be

traent of

Gregor von Rezzori

in history and character, complex in nationality and ethnic alsuccessive waves of rapaciously competitive nationalism.

This territorial insecurity destabilised and finally obliterated the boundaries of the Bukovina, where von Rezzori was born in 1914 and in which he spent his childhood and youth, so searchingly and lovingly recreated in the early sections of his autobiography The Snows of Yesteryear (1990).

Individual sections of this book invoke the character of his father, mother, sister, nurse and governess and von Rezzori simultaneously brings to life their shared environment in the Bukovina, a troubled Areadia in the Carpathian forestlands and the Tatra mountains; once the kingdom of Galicia, then one of the autonomous crownlands of the Austro-Hungarian realm until its penultimate allocation. in 1918, to the kingdom of

In 1940, after a treaty between the Third Reich and the Soviet Union, the Bukovina was divided into two, with the southern half, including Moldavia. ceded to Romania and the northern region, which included Czernowitz, the author's hirthplace and the capital of the old kingdom, awarded to the Soviet republic of Ukraine. It is hard for the English, relatively secure in their island, to envisage the shifting sands of unstable context for childhood and

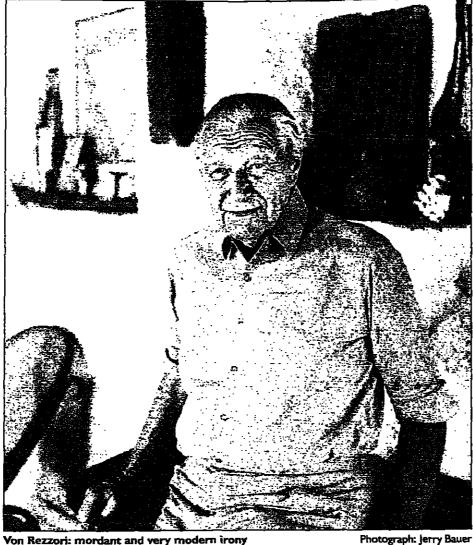
Von Rezzori's major claim to tionally with the earlier publication of his great novel Memoirs of an Anti-Semite (1981) which first and quite fa-

THE NOVELIST and mem-chapter from the book itself, in oirist Gregor von Rezzori was the New Yorker. Although the one of the last and most re- provocative title of the book doubtable links with a Mid-to- caused preliminary ripples of Eastern European world, rich unease in the United States. glowing reviews throughout the New York press quickly establegiance, that has gone forever, lished not only the liberal and devoured or dispersed through deeply civilised credentials of the new writer but also the depth and originality of his gift.

Memoirs of an Anti-Semite is an original, continually surprising, beautifully paced and modulated work of fiction, a small masterpiece, with bracing undertones of that detached and astringent, cheerfully mordant and very modern irony that we find in such disparate writers as Musil, Schnitzler, Pirandello and Italo Svevo. Some aspects of the narrative are obliquely autobiographical; the novel as a whole takes on deeper resonance after a reading of The Snows of Yesteryear. With French and Italian

translations following the British and American publication of these books, von Rezzori appeared as a new and somewhat exotic writer in New York, Paris and London in the early 1980s but in fact two earlier books had been published in Germany in the early Fifties, already securing a sizeable reputation: Tales from Maglirebinia (1953) and Oedipus Triumphs at Stalingrad (1954), Another novel, Ein Hennelin in Tschemopol, appeared in the United States under the title The Hussar and won the Theodor Fontane prize. Tales from Maghrebinia. a sequence of fantasies and sardonic cautionary tales, was illustrated with line drawings by

Von Rezzori's recurring themes in his novels all reflect within unstable contexts the fame was registered interna- ebb and flow, rise and fall of personal relationships which seek to balance or to reconcile the creative artist's sense of commitment and responsibilimously appeared in 1969 as an ty with the irresponsibilities isolated story, a self-contained and betrayals that so often cupation, reassigned from the winters in Egypt.



Von Rezzori: mordant and very modern irony

seem inseparable from the artist's life. These unstable contexts, from pre-war Bucharest to Vienna, reflect the author's childhood and youthful experience set out in such detail in The Snows of Yesteryear.

The family home on the outskirts of Czernowitz was on the verge of wild, deep country. A journey of 50 miles could take three days by horse and carriage. Von Rezzori's father hygiene, propriety and childwas an eccentric aristocrat, a passionate huntsman and an architectural historian, whose oc-

former Austrian civil service. was to look after the estates belonging to the Orthodox Church with the special task of overseeing the monasteries of the Bukovina. These buildings were usually set in remote mountainous country, visited by father and son on horseback across the Carpathian mountains. His loving but neurasthenic mother, obsessed with rearing methods, was estranged

from her spirited, extrovert

husband and passed the

The von Rezzori family lived a privileged life of possessions. houses, travels abroad, servants, dogs and horses. Gregor grew up in "a melting pot of ethnic groups. languages, creeds, temperaments and customs", as he has described it. If the lingua franca for so many Russians, Ukrainians, Romanians, Poles and Austrians was German with the von Rezzoris still looking to the nearest metropolis, Vienna, as their cultural capital - it was also essential to emkeeping and always looked insight. down upon, there were the innumerable dialects of Yiddish

This early mixture of ty in Vienna, he was educated known Mark Twain, and von Rezzori spoke English fluently sometimes trusted himself to write sections of his books difor his English publishers, Chatto and Windus, was Chatterbox of a whole epoch". and Windbag, although if hecould have known that Memoirs of an Anti-Semite would be out of print at the time of his death, his epithet might have been sharper English publishing seems now to have joined all the other diasporas of the 20th

The penetrating descriptions of character and conduct which make up the five "Portraits" in The Snows of Yesteryear - including ruthless dissections of his own attitudes and behaviour - bring out von Rezzori's flair for language which he cultivated almost like a collector, with the occasional, carefully planted, esoteric word that matched John Updike's love for the look and the sound of rare words. In this book there are also loving descriptions of autumn mornings, dead leaves, woodsmoke and birdsong, and the torpor of summer evenings disturbed only by the sounds of the forest and by light filtering though vine leaves.

Family life here becomes a. kind of bucolic tragi-comedy but there is nothing Chekhovian in von Rezzori's creation of time ploy different languages for and place. Hitler's rise is confamily, schoolfriends, servants stantly in the background, and

tongues helped to make von Sartre's Les Mots. If von Rez-Rezzon's prose both subtle and zori's novel seems to read in and a near neighbour in Tussharp, with a pungency of its places like a thinly disguised carry, John Kasmin, the collecown. Before going to university memoir, the autobiography, conversely, is written with the of an Anti-Semite there is a mowith a cultivated accent - and on the fascination of turning- the estate in Tuscany where you points, "a change of time's. Rezzori spent every spring and quality, so to say, when a mere. summer. rectly in English. His pet name change of atmosphere can alter the course of one's life or that

ly responsive sensitivity to char- a lecturer, and more recently acter in relation to time and- in the suddenly liberated vesplace, heredity and motive - underlies all of von Rezzori's writing. He knew better than most the spectacle of so much spirithe strange, often harsh new fac- tual and material dilapidation tors which rule our century. and sometimes govern our lives and behaviour.

Von Rezzori's work as a scriptwriter and broadcaster for radio in the post-war years in Germany, and then writing and editing filmscripts in Italy touch with several well-known film directors and actors. From a lifelong friendship with Louis Malle came an amusing performance on film as Brigitte Bardot's father in Viva Maria in handsome figure of a man who would look well on horseback for a few brief scenes and von Rezzoni, always a great man for part. He formed a mutually admiring friendship with the film's co-star, Jeanne Moreau.

In the mid-Sixties, he fell in love with and married a beautiful and cultivated Italian aristocrat, Beatrice Monti della died Donnini, Italy 23 April 1998.

and tradespeople. And for Jews, the anti-Semitism which von Corte, who was closely involved sometimes prosperous in busiRezzori dealt with so searchwith artists and writers, and their ness, law or medicine, but more ingly in his earlier novel is life together in Tuscany, Lindos often poor in service or shop- analysed here with telling and New York for the past 35 years provided a perfect anchor The Snows of Yesterwar is a for his slow, painstaking writing classic which bears comparison and his gregarious love of life in its artistic integrity with when not working. Their clos-Nabokov's Speak, Memory and est friends included Volke Schlöndorf, the film director. tor and art dealer: Isabella Rossellini: Bruce Chatwin and by an English governess, a re- vividly imaginative range and Michael Ondaatje, both of markable character who had density of a novel. In Memoirs whom produced some of their best-known writing as guests in meat where the narrator reflects the elegantly equipped tower on

> Gregor von Rezzori became a celebrity in the last 30 years of his life. First in Germany This same awareness of where he was greatly in demand turning-points - an elaborate ... on television talk-shows and as tiges of Eastern Europe, post-Ceausescu, post-Stalin, where caused von Rezzori, who remembered better times and places, much anguish of the heart and mind.

> He was a good-looking dandy, of great presence, to the end, with a wardrobe of clothes which filled the entire side of a at Cinecittà brought him in double-cube room. He continued to write; his last book of reflections, explorations and memories, Anecdotage (1996). is notable for its screnity, spirit of enquiry, wry humour and ironic penetration of contem-1965. The director wanted a porary follies - and bemused love for his vivacious and briskly if sometimes confusingly intelligent wife, whose lifelong passion for very modern art could the ladies, certainly looked the alone reduce him to resigned speechlessness.

> > Bryan Robertson

Gregor von Rezzori, writer: born Czernowitz Austro-Hungary B May 1914; twice married (two sons);

James Earl Ray

JAMES EARL RAY was an ob- John F. Kennedy, his brother scure low-life drifter and petty Robert Kennedy, and Martin criminal whose name became Luther King. In each case, an obknown to the whole world as scure and more or less deranged the convicted assassin of Dr Martin Luther King.

to the murder in court, that was the only time he did acknowledge his guilt: sentenced to 99 years in the state penitentiary at Riverbend, Tennessee, Ray insisted on his innocence in sev- plausible plotters. eral interviews and in a bizarre trial" staged by the British with a real American judge and 12 real live Tennessee jurors.

Ray's guilt or innocence can dangerously radical. only be understood in terms of central, but ambiguous, role of Martin Luther King.

American society was traumatised by a series of assassinations and assassination

individual was officially indicated as the killer. In each case, too. Although he pleaded guilty a whole literature of conspiracy theory, expounded in countless books, articles and television programmes, not to mention films like Oliver Stone's JFK. laid the blame on more or less

A hero and a saint to some. King was a suspect and a villalit company Granada Television. to others. Some again applauded his early non-violent campaign against segregation, The continuing mystery of but saw his later career as

J. Edgar Hoover, the head of the feverish state of American the FBI as he had been for de- his way to Canada. politics in the late 1960s and the cades, was an inveterate enemy of King, whom he suspected of being a crypto-Communist, and did his best to discredit him by King (an ordained minister) was attempts on the lives of President with under-age girls and boys.

TODAY: Protessor Bob Boucher,

Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Umist, 58; Mr Eric Bristow, darts

By April 1968, when King came to Memohis, he was no longer only the champion of black rights, but an outspoken critic of President Johnson and of the war in Vietnam who seemed to be challenging the entire social order.

According to the court which convicted him, Ray checked into room 5b of a seedy boarding house on South Main Street and shot King with a Remington 30.06 hunting rifle out of the looked the Lorraine, the motel where King was staving. Ray then got into a rented white Ford Mustang and, in spite of an allpoints FBI bulletin, drove 382 miles to Atlanta, and then made

From Toronto he flew to London, According to one account, he was picked up when he ran out of money and tried circulating tapes suggesting that to rob a bank. Other accounts state that he wanted to join the attempts, notably the successful a hypocrite with a taste for sex white mercenaries fighting against black independence in

an American lawyer (to the dismay of his court-appointed British lawyer) to waive a hearing on his extradition to the United States, so that the facts of the case were never aired in a British court. Then he was persuaded to plead guilty to

murder in Tennessee. Ray was born in 1924, the eldest of nine children of an unskilled labourer who was frequently unemployed. At school, ed to damage America's repu- Kimble who claimed to have same suspects - the FBI, the frequently in trouble. He had a conflict between white and Neviolent temper and stood out, even among poor whites of the Mississippi valley in the Depression years, for his hostility to black people.

in the stockade. Discharged in came over the radio. "The shit 1948, he inevitably turned to is going to hit the fan!" By the crime, at which he was equally incompetent. He was convicted riots in more than 100 Ameriof burglary in Los Angeles in can cities, in which at least 37 1949, of robbery in Chicago in 1952, and of forgery in Missouri in 1955. In 1960 he began a 20- tion at the time was that the mo- result of coercion", and said "I racist criminals he met in prison. Nashville, Tennessee 23 April 1998.

Rhodesia. He was persuaded by year stretch in a Missouri state tive for King's murder was In 1967 he escaped by stowing away inside a bakery van.

There is no shortage of explanations of why Ray might have killed King, if he did. The Alabaman novelist William Bradford Huie paid Ray \$25,000 for his story while he was awaiting trial, and concluded that King was murdered "by calculating men" who wanttation by causing "vi gro citizens". If the murder was planned by men with that intention, they were successful. "This is it, baby," said a black man in Washington, minutes af-In the army, he served a term ter the news of King's death

> end of the week, there had been people were killed.

penitentiary for armed robbery. racism: either the racial hatred of a single killer, or more probably a racist conspiracy. The US justice department closed the file on the case in 1983, even though a congressional com-

investigation. murder King. Kimble said he FBI and with the help of a CIA agent in Canada. Ray himself denied he had any help from anvone except from a mysterious "Raoul", who (said Ray) framed him for the murder.

In January 1993 another British television company, cell, claimed that he pleaded

had no responsibility in the assault on Dr King." In 1993 there were reports.

again in Britain, that a retired Memphis businessman. Lloyd Jowers, had confessed to hiring another (unnamed) man to kill mittee on assassinations had King. Jowers also claimed to concluded that there was a have been paid to kill King by conspiracy and called for further the late Frank Liberto, a Memphis man connected to the Car-In 1989 the BBC interviewed los Marcello Mafia family in a man called Jules "Rocco" New Orleans. Precisely the were favourite suspects in many helped Ray on the orders of the of the conspiracy theories about

the London-based American lawyer Bill Pepper, a leading theorist on the King assassination. implicates a US Army Special Forces detachment, Alpha 184, and assigns a conspiratorial role Thames, staged a mock trial in to the mysterious Raoul. Yet othwhich Ray, interviewed from his er investigators of the assassination conclude that Ray might The more general supposi- guilty in the original trial "as a have been put up to kill King by

the Kennedy assassination.



Photograph: Corbis

Even before the assassina-Another theory, advanced by tion, Ray had spent nearly onethird of his adult life behind bars. Interviewed by a journalist be was asked what he would do with his freedom. "I would be out of the country within 72 hours," he said.

Godfrey Hodgson

James Earl Ray, criminal: born Alton, Illinois 10 March 1928: died

BIRTHS. **MARRIAGES** & DEATHS

DEATHS

RANKIN: Susan Penelope (nee Stobbs) on 22 April: Partner of Shaun Horgresses Heap: Puneral at Horsham St. Fath Crematorium, Norwich, on Friday 1 May at 3pm. Family flowers only, Donations to Imperial Cancer Research Fund e/o Peter Taylor Funeral Services 85 Unihank Road, Norwich.

IN MEMORIAM

SMITH: Evelyn (25 April 1916-24 August 1997). Devoted sister of the late Gladys Smith (deed 2 May 1917). Thinking of you today and remem-bering you always with love. Broth-ers Jack and Dave XX.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adop-MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Birchs, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Momoria corrices, Wodding anniversaries, in Memonamy should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London El4 5DL telephoned to 0771-273 2011 or fased to 0771-273 2010, and are charged at 6.50 a line (VAT catra). OTHER Gazette annuccerous crists be submitted in writnouncements must be submitted in writ-ing (or fased) and are charged at 60 a line, VAT extra. Please include a daytime telephone number.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

Changing of the Guard

TODAY: The Household Canain Mounted Reg-ment mounts the Junear's Life Guard at Horse Guards, Fram 1st Burtalism the Puke of Welling-

Birthdays

champion, 41: Mr Anthony Christopher, former trade union leader, 73; Mr Johann Cruyff, football manager, 51: Mr David de Peyer, former Director-General, Cancer Research Campaign, 64: Sir Francis Graham-Smith, former Astronomer Royal, 75; Lord Hayter, former chairman. Chubb & Sun. 87: Mr Alan Hoole. tormer Governor of Anguilla, 56; Sir Paul Judge, former Director-General, Conservative Party, 49; The Earl of Lichtield, photographer, 59; Sir Michael Llewellyn Smith, ambassador to Greece, 59; Mr lan Mc-Cartney MP, Minister of State for Machin, Under Treasurer, Grav's Inn. 64: Lidy Marre, former chairman. BBC and IBA Central Appeals Advisory Committee. 78: Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Godfrey Milton-Thompson, 68: Mr Buster Mouram. tennis player, 43: Miss Marian Norrie, eireuit judge, 5%; Mr John Owen, Governor of the Cayman Islands, 59: Mr Al Pacino, actor, 58; Miss Helen Paling, circuit judge, 65: Mr William Roache, actor, 66: Mr Adrian Sanders MP. 39: Mr David Shepherd. artist, 67: Lord Skidelsky, Professor of Political Economy, Warwick University, 59; Mr Paul Stinehoombe MP. 36: Mrs Veronica Sutherland, ambassador to the Republic of Ireland. 59. Mr Biorn Ulvaeus, singer, 53. TO-MORROW: Mr John Battle MP. Minister of State, Science and Industry, 47; Sir Roger Buckley, High Court judge, 59; The Marques, of Bute, racing driver, 49; Sir Edward Cazalet, High Court judge, 62: Mr David Coleman, sports commentator, 72: Mr Jack Douglas, actor and

Partiamentary Commissioner for

ford, 68: Professor Margaret Gow-ing, scientific historian, 77: Mr Stu-art Higgins, Editor, the Sun, 42: Sir Sir Robin Jacob, High Court judge, 57; Dr Lynne Jones MP, 47; Maj-Gen Harry Knutton, former Director-General, London City and Guilds Institute. 77; Dame Anne McLaren. zoologist, 71; Professor Wilfrid Mellers, composer, 84; Sir Oliver Millar, former Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, 75: Professor Jack Morpurgo. Emeritus Professor of Amercan Literature, Leeds University, 80 Mr Richard Nichols, Lord Mayor of London, 60; Professor Philip Poole-Wilson, cardiologist, 55: Mr Peter Schaufuss, ballet dancer, choreographer and producer, 48; Mr Derek Waring, actor, 68; Mr Morris West.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England, 1599; Walter de la Mare, poet and novel-ist, 1873. Deaths: William Cowper. poet, 1800; Ginger Rogers (Virginia Katherine McMath), actress and dancer. 1995. On this day: con-struction of the Suez Canal began. 1859. Today is Anzac Day and the Feast Day of St Anianus of Alexandria. St Heribald and St Mark the Evangelist, TOMORROW: Birther Leonardo da Vinci, painter, sculptor and architect. 1452: David Hume, philosopher and historian. 1711. Deaths: Dame Cicely Courtneidge, actress. 1960; William "Count" Basic, jazz pianist and bandleader. 1984. On this day: the Duke of York (later King George VI married Elizabeth Bowes Lyon (Later Queen Elizabeth). 1923; an accident at the Soviet nuclear power station at Chemobyl resulted in a massive nuclear leak, 1986. contediun, 71: Sir Gordon Downey. Today is the Feast Day of St Franca of Praceiva. St Paschesius Radbertus, Standards, 70; Mr Justin Gosling, for-mer Principal, St Edmund Hall, Ox-St Peter of Braga. St Richarius or Riquier and St Stephen of Perm.

FAITH & REASON

Welcome to Mandelson's Millennium Mosque

Fuad Nahdi explains why Britain's Muslims are divided over whether to join in the celebrations for the year 2000

TODAY may mark the beginning of the Islamic new year. The uncertainty is because like almost all Semitic calendars the Islamic one is based upon the cycles of the moon rather than upon those of the sun, on which the Western calendar, devised by Pope Gregory the Great, is based. The actual beginning of a month - as opposed to its predicted beginning from astronomical calculations - depends on the physical sighting of the new moon. The insistence upon the actual sighting reflects the sense in Islam that it is the immediate surrounding conditions, rather than theoretical ones, that actually reflect the Divine Will in its relation to men, and that it is these which should determine sacred acts.

The Islamic new year coincides not with the birth of Muhammad but with the founding of the first Muslim comigration of the Prophet Muhammad post-modern festival indeed.

from Mecca to Medina following per-Islamic era. In practice, however, the Western calendar is used today as the working calendar everywhere in the bia - for all purposes except for determining days of religious observance.

Normally the Islamic new year starts without much notice or fuss among British Muslims but this year it will be somewhat different. The planned celebration of the "New Millennium" has provoked debate within the comaccording to the Islamic calendar the new year is 1419 H. But the task of getting rid of this irrelevant Western influence on the psyche of the umma (Muslim community) is proving to be a difficult one. From Egypt to Malaysia, Pakistan to Morocco, celebrations of some kind have been planned. In some places, like Turkey, particularly among the secularised population, the excitement borders on semi-hysteria: in Istanbul there is a weekly magazine called Iki Bin'e Dogru ("Straight to 2000"). The fact that most modern scholars believe Jesus was in fact born in the year 4 BC - and that 1996, not 2000, marked the second millennium of his advent - renmunity in Medina - the Hijrah, or em- ders the date entirely meaningless: a

secution is used as the first year of the nium invariably meander into speculation about the future. This raises a done in a halal (lawful) way? For the Muslim world - apart from Saudi Ara- future is known only to God. And it may well be that the human race will not reach the year 2000 at all.

Apocalyptic expectations are not new in Islamic history. Imam al-Suyuti, the greatest scholar of medieval Egypt, was concerned about the nervous expectations many Muslims had about the Muslim millennium, the year 1000 of the munity. To Muslims this is not 2000 AD: Hijrah. Would it herald the end of the world? Many at the time thought so. Imam al-Suyuti insisted there was no evidence that the first millennium of Islam would end human history. But, rather soberingly for our generation, he speculated that the signs which will usher in the return of Jesus and the Anti-Christ (al-Masih al-Dajjal), are most likely to appear in the 15th century; in other words, our own!

But all these speculations were submissive to the Imam's deep Islamic awareness that knowledge of the future is with God; and only Prophets can prophesy. When it comes to celebrating the year 2000 British Muslims are caught in a moral, theological and spiritual quandary. Do they participate in an event that clearly is a celebration of

Discussions about the New Millen- the secular and the mundane over the spiritual and the eternal? For many Muslims the chosen main exhibit - that sharp theological question: can this be of a huge human form - is evidence enough of the idolatrous nature of the event. Furthermore, the involvement of lottery money in the project makes it even less spiritually attractive.

Others have argued that though the event is not perfect Muslims should see it as an opportunity to present their message in, literally, the belly of the beast. A well-thought-out Muslim section would provide a unique opportunity for millions of visitors to be introduced to positive and relevant aspects of Islam. It would also send a clear message that Islam, the second largest faith in the country, is part and parcel of the spiritual landscape.

There is one other argument. The choice of a dome - a symbol normally associated with mosques - to represent the whole Millennium experience has been a source of much puzzlement and excitement. "We should participate." I have heard somebody say, "because who knows, one day, when Britain is a Muslim country insha' Allah, we wouldn't have to build a new Islamic centre. A crescent and star on the Millennium Dome would send the message far and wide!" But then I am sure that Peter Mandelson will have thought of that,



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Sears down at heel following an unhappy week



week's results.

The shares, in busy trading, fell 3p to 58.25p. Figures are due on Tuesday and the stock much of the running as dismarket's best expectation is a enchantment engulfed the down-at-heel profit of £45m once high-flying financials. compared with £88.1m.

Exceptional charges, largely stemming from the group's struggle for Argos, the cataretreat from the shoe industry, will weigh heavily on the figures. They could be around £170m.

Julie Ramshaw at investadopting a cautious stance. price. Still, the retail group should be able to case the pain with details of its demerger of the Sel-

ended a downbeat week on a tank alliance, added 57p to decidedly unhappy note. Footsie fell 34.2 points to 5,863.9. At one time it was off 112.7,

er, had an uncertain session as Supporting shares, however, which also depressed the forworries multiplied about next were in better form with the mer building societies with small cap index actually managing modest progress.

One again exporters made

Great Universal Store's dramatic success in the fierce logue stores chain, lifted its shares 42p to 856p, a peak, Argos, which had seemed capable of avoiding the unwanted GUS embrace, jumped 37p to ment house Morgan Stanley is 645p, against the 650p bid

Rolls-Royce and GKN underlined the return of the exporters to favour as sterling has fridges department store and lost some of its exuberance. then the Freemans mail-order. The aero engine group climbed 16p to 291.5p and The rest of the market GKN, helped by its European

Financials torrid time was emphasised by a 32.5p fall to with profit-taking among fi- 937p by Lloyds TSB. It was 721p. And Pearson, which

MARKET REPORT SEARS, the struggling retail- nancials largely responsible. hurt by talk of a mortgage war clinched the sale of its con-

Woolwich down 8.5p to 335p. Insurances were again anxious with Commercial Union, unsettled by its cautious statement earlier in the week, off 50p at 1,070p. Other insurers feeling the pinch included Norwich Union, down 13p to 449.5p, and CU's intended did the latest damage. partner, General Accident off

British Biotech, the struggling drugs group, looked like being confined to the casualty ward before a late rally left the shares unchanged at 50p. Credit Lyonnais research suggesting the shares were up to five times overvalued did the early damage. Carlton Communications

40p at 1.387p.

improved 17p to 478p following a presentation at Dresdner Kleinwort Benson. Diageo's decision to sell some fringe drink brands went down well with the shares up 31.5p to

sumer magazines, hardened 9p

Cadbury Schweppes, riding at a 904p peak only weeks ago. fell 22p to 823p. Worries persist about sales at its US soft drinks operation. But it was the sale by chief executive John Sunderland of 10,000 shares at 780p earlier this month which



MJJASONDJEMA

Booker, the cash and carry chain, lost 10.5p to 260.5p as wornes resurfaced about its tight profit margins and the

countering integrating its Nordin & Peacock acquisition. British Dredging, one of the market's oldest takeover bre optics group, fell 13.5p to chestnuts, seems finally to 101.5p after reporting it had have fallen. The shares edged forward 7p to 191.5p as

mounted an agreed £35.3m offer. The Irish builders meroperations substantially in the past three years. The deal will hit its chain of British outlets to approaching 70. It acquired 29.87 per cent of Dredging last year at 145n a share against the 193.op it is offering for the rest.

Hard-pressed Waverley Mining edged forward 2.5p to 21.5p after reporting bid talks were still taking place: La Senza, a lingerie chain, crumpled 10p to 12.5p when it said its bid acgotiations were con-

tinuing but any price was likeiv to be near to 10p.

Vero, the electronic equipment group, improved a furdifficulty it is seemingly en- ther 17.5p to 170p on the prospect of a United States battle for control.

But IQC International, a fiterminated bid talks.

Tring International held at Grafton, an Irish group, 6.5p. The home entertainment group has secured new banking facilities and is raischent has expanded its British ing between £300,000 and £1.1m through an offer at 6.5p a share. Petra Diamonds, up 8p at

145.5p, sparkled on rumours of a significant find in Angola. and Premier Oil gushed 2.75p to 43.75p reflecting talk of a Singapore gas deal. Wickes, the builders mer-

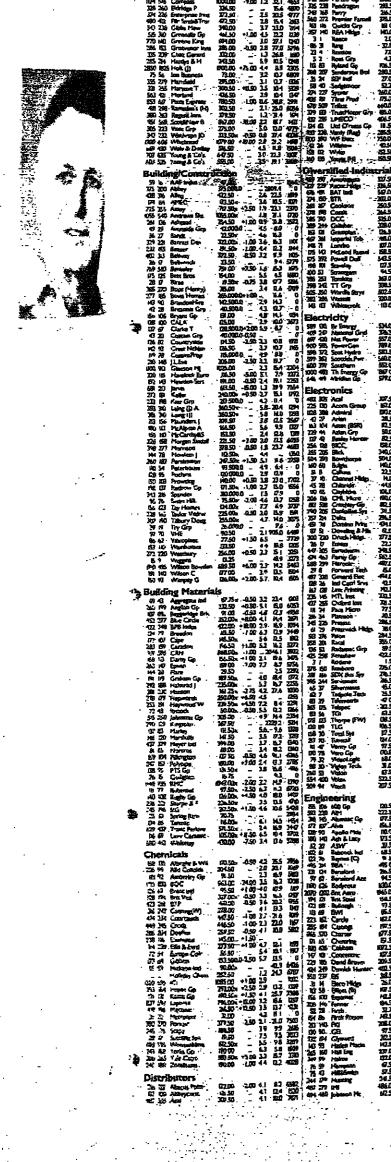
chant cum do-it-yourself group, rose 4p to 354.5p as it met analysts and electrical group Bowthorpe was 5.5p firmer at 504p ahead of analytical interest.

TAKING STOCK

WASSALL, the conglomerate which has reinvented itself as a venture copitalist. continues to take a shine to TLG, the old Thorn Lighting. It has lifted its stake to 7.12 per cent. TLG rose 8p to 106.5p after 111.5p in brisk trading. Wassail is not expected to bid: it is, the market believes, attempting to put pressure on the TLG management to do a deal.

STG, a fledgling property group traded on Ofex, rose 2p to 74.5p. It has high hopes of an Uister peace dividend by developing a Grade 11 listed building at Londonderry. STG plans a department store with a restaurant and other retail outlets. The company was created by Stefan Allesch-Taylor, who has 29.9 per cent.

FQOD group John Lusty, on the verge of a big acquisition, lifted profits 157 per cent to £1.9m in the year to end March. The shares are





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GUS wins £1.9bn battle for Argos

By Nigel Cope Dic (Conrespondent

GREAT Universal Stores clinched a dramatic victory in its £1.9bn hostile bid for Argos yesterday after the catalogue retailer's largest shareholder deeided to accept the 650p per share eash ofter.

Schröders Investment Management left its decision to the last minute but swung the vote when it decided to pledge its 15 per cent stake to GUS, "It was quite close but we thought it was in the best interests of our clients," said Schroders director Jim Cox, who added: "I've had my 15 minutes of fame, if that's what it was, I can disappear

Schroders' move ensured success for GUS which secured acceptance from 58 per cent of Argos shares. Both sides had been on tenterhooks vesterday morning saying the bid was too close to call. However, analysis said the lure of cash and the dip in the stock market in the past few days had made the offer difticult to turn down. A GUS spokesman said an overwhelming majority of Argos largest 40 shareholders had accepted the

One of the shareholders who hacked Argos said: "Cash at a premium is clearly attractive and the record shows that these kind of bids are usually successful. But we would have fiked

to have seen how the company would have done if it had remained independent."

Ashley Thomas at SG Securities said: "I think GUS will be able to do a lot with the business but all credit to Argos and the defence team. When the bid started it looked like a knock-out

Lord Wolfson, GUS's chairman, said he was delighted with his side's victory but was struggling to speak due to a sore throat caused by his efforts to persuade shareholders to back his bid. "I look forward to welcoming Argos' employees' to GUS and to building on Argos's strengths which together with our home shopping business will create a formidable British based retail business.

Sir Richard Lloyd, Argos chairman, said he was "disappointed" with the outcome but said the company had received a fair hearing from shareholders.

GUS shares rose 42p to 856p as the Cir. warmed to the bid's success. Argos shares closed up 608p at 645p.

Stuart Rose, Argos' chief executive who was only recruited after the bid had been launched due to illness of Mike Smith, met Lord Wolfson yesterday afternoon to discuss the hand-over of the business and communications with staff.

Mr Rose will receive £540,000 for less than three months work. Mr Smith is in line retire.

for a pay-off of more than £1m. This includes £640,000 under the terms of his two year contract, and shares worth almost

Bob Stewart, the finance director who was due to retire, will receive £200,000 plus £80,000 for his shares. Peter Fishbourne and Trevor Green will receive more than £500,000 each.

GUS will now concentrate on integrating the Argos business with its own retail operations which include the Marshall Ward catalogue and the White Arrow delivery network. Major cost-cutting is not expected as the major benefit of the deal for GUS is adding its home shopping and delivery systems to the Argos stores, GUS will introduce some of its own lines, particularly clothing, to the Argos catalogue. Argos products, which are focused on hard goods such as toys, electricals and jewellery, will be featured in GUS's catalogues.

GUS is expected to keep the Argos management below board level as it feels they have done

The bid battle ended up much closer than expected. When GUS pounced in February Argos appeared in disarray. Its shares had been savaged by three profits warning in a year. Within days of the bid it was forced to disclose that Mr Smith was too ill to fulfil his duties and later that Mr Stewart was set to









Catalogue of a home shopping struggle

1 FEBRUARY: Lord Wolfson meets Sir Richard Lloyd at Schroders, advisers to Argos, regarding a possible agreed deal. Sir Richard says the offer is too low and rejects it.

3 FEBRUARY: GUS launches hostile bid at 570p, valuing Argos at £1.6bn. Argos rejects it as opportunistic and reveals Mike Smith, its chief executive, is too ill to carry out his full duties. After three profits warnings in a year, Argos looks vuinerable.

9 FEBRUARY: Argos appoints Stuart Rose, the former Burton director, as acting chief executive. With a signing on fee of £180,000 he stands to collect a total of £543,000 for two months' work if Argos loses.

17 FEBRUARY: GUS publishes its offer document saying

near supporting a price today of

26 FEBRUARY: The madir of Argos' defence. It emerges that Bob Stewart, finance director is

"Shopping at Argos is a bit like kissing your sister." - Stuart Rose on the lack of excitment in the group's stores.

"I like kissing my sister." -Sir Richard

to take early retirement though the announcement is buried in the small print of the defence document. With a 69 year old

ecutive and a finance director on the brink of retirement, Argos faces an uphili battle.

13 MARCH: GUS annonnces a £500m "agreed" deal to buy Metromail, an American database company. The deal develops into an auction with rival US bidder leaving GUS

fighting on two fronts. 25 MARCH: Argos unveils new retailing strategy including a fashion joint venture with Littlewoods, plans to modernise the stores and catalogue and add one per cent to the margin over two years.

26 APRIL: A setback for Lord Wolfson as Next, where he is chairman, announces a shock profits warning.

1 APRIL: Bid receives OFT

3 APRIL: Argos' final defence published including a £150m return of funds to shareholders

and bullish profit forecasts. 8 APRIL: GUS raises offer to 650p per share valuing Argos at

"We think the Argos management is good. Where we disagree with them is at board level. They seem to be. suffering from strategic constipation."- Lord Wolfson.

£1.9bn. Argos rejects it but analysts are almost unanimous in their opinion that it will be

17 APRIL: GUS completes Metromail deal after lengthy Decau!

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MPs back

18 APRIL: In a last ditch effort to get investors on its side, Argos gets Takeover Panel perission to release fresh, upbeat ligures on current trading. But the Sunday papers side with GUS.

22 APRIL: Argos has its biggest break in weeks. Prudential, with a 7 per cent stake, announces its support of the Argos management saying the company has been a good long term performer and could outperform the market once more. Baitlie Gifford, with 6.6 per cent follows suit: But Schroders Investment Management holds the key with a 15 per cent stake.

24 APRIL: GUS clinches victory after Schroders accepts

Fresh cheer over interest rates

By Diane Coyle

THERE was tresh cheer yesterday for businesses and home-buyers hoping that the cost of borrowing will climb no higher, with new figures showing nat growth slowed in the first quarter of this year.

The increase in Gross Domestic Product, the widest measure of the economy, was 0.4 per cent. This was less than expected and the lowest in any quarter since mid-1995.

The year-on-year growth rate declined from 2.9 per cent to 2.8 per cent. closer to the sustainable trend.

"If you weren't convinced interest rates had peaked before these figures. you should be now," said David Hilli-

er of Barclays Capital. Some economists were less confident, but virtually none expects the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee to change rates from the current level of 7.25 per cent after its meeting next month.

The caution stemmed mainly from the fact that initial GDP estimates are usually revised. Growth in the final quarter of 1997, now put at 0.6 per cent, was also first put at a relatively weak 0.4 per cent.

passed, but the evidence has not really been overwhelming," said Ken Wattret, an analyst at Paribas. It would not have shaken out all the hawks on the MPC, he predicted.

The available figures showed that manufacturing was broadly flat during

the quarter, while production - adding in energy extraction and the electricity, gas and water supply - had declined.

Service sector output climbed by a still-robust 0.8 per cent, down from 1.2 per cent the previous quarter. The Office for National Statistics indicated that growth in most components appeared to be slowing, although little detail is available before the next stab at estimating first quarter GDP, due late next month.

Critics of the Government pounced "The greatest risk of a rate rise has on the signs of weaker growth, with Malcolm Bruce, the Liberal Democrat spokesman, claiming that the economy outside the service sector was now in recession.

According to calculations by the House of Commons Library, yesterday's

figures implied that output in the other third of the economy - manufacturing, agriculture and construction had fallen for two consecutive quarters.

Gordon Brown, speaking to the Scottish Business Forum in Glasgow, repeated his familiar message of the need to stick to tough policies for the We will not Sake of lone-letter compromise our hard-won reputation for prudence in economic management by short-term gestures." he said.

The Chancellor also stressed the importance of investment and innovation, drawing attention to the Government's cuts in corporation tax to 30p and additional investment incentives. He hinted that more might follow. "We are prepared to look at further changes," he said.

Yesterday's figures were enough for currency strategists to start advising investors to sell sterling, with some predicting a 20-25 per cent fall. The recent weaker economic figures, along with reports that one of the MPC's hawks has changed his mind about the need for a rate rise, have shifted sentiment in the financial markets.

However, there was little reaction in the currency markets yesterday. The pound ended the day virtually unchanged, with the sterling index at 105.9 and the rate against the German mark at DM2.99.

There were further gains in short sterling futures, which now imply traders expect interest rates to be falling by the autumn. The FTSE-100 index fell 34 points to 5,863.9.

Cabinet set to decide future of coal industry

By Michael Harrison

THE FUTURE of the coal industry is due to be decided next week when a Cabinet sub-committee meets to agree on a strategy for locking in a share of the energy market for Britain's coal producers.

Geoffrey Robinson, the Paymaster General, who has been spearheading efforts to find a long-term solution for the industry, said yesterday that "important decisions" would be taken at the meeting. Other key figures on the sub-committee include the President of the Board of Trade, Margaret Beckett, and the Industry Minister John Battle.

Mr Robinson said: "It isn't about saving the coal industry, it is about getting a sensible energy policy." However, what ministers have been working towards is a deal which carves out a market for between 25 and 30 million tonnes of coal a year.

Various options are being examined, including an extension of the moratorium on approving any further gas-fired stations and changes in the workings of the electricity pool to encourage more use of coal-fired generating stations. The sub-committee has also looked at the interconnector between England and France which at the moment only imports electricity - generated



a 'sensible energy policy'

from French coal. Whatever measures are adopted, however, there are likely to be significant pit closures and thousands of job losses. Last year RJB, which owns 17 of the 23 deep mines still in production in the UK, sold 27 million tonnes to the generators but so far this year it has only secured contracts for a little over half that tonnage.

Under a deal cobbled together just before Christmas, RJB Mining was thrown a lifeline to maintain production at current levels for a further three months after its long-term guaranteed contracts with the generators ran out at the end

Mr Robinson said that "sateisfactory progress" was being made to broker a new deal.

Scottish Power pulls out of talks over £3bn US deal

By Michael Harrison

SCOTTISH POWER yesterday pulled out of talks to spend more than 13hn on an American electricity company after news of the deal leaked in the US. In a brief statement Scottish

Power said it had terminated discussions about buying Florida Progress, an electricity generator and supplier with 1.3 million customers in Florida and sales of \$3bn a year. Negotiations had been at an

advanced stage and a team from Scottish Power had begun the process of due diligence, a spokesman said. He added that it was no longer interested in

STOCK MARKETS

FTSE 100

acquiring Florida Progress and there was no question of talks being re-opened.

However, he said Scottish Power remained interested in buying a US utility as part of its expansion strategy and it was continuing to look for opportunities.

Scottish Power said it had withdrawn from the deal because the due diligence process established Florida Progress was not worth what it was proposing to pay.

The US business was valued at \$5bn. However, the leaking of the takeover talks had also prompted a sharp jump in the share price of Florida Progress

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which would have meant Scottish Power having to pay more to gain control anyway.

Had the deal gone ahead it would have reversed the process which has seen more than half the electricity suppliers in the UK fall under the control of US utilities. Scottish Power obtained a

listing on the New York stock exchange last year, partly for the purpose of being able to issue shares to fund acquisitions. The group has been one of

the most aggressive multi-utilities in the UK, acquiring first Manweb and then Southern Water. It has also diversified into telecoms and gas.

INTEREST RATES

UK 10 year gilt

Centrica board deflates critics with dividend hint

By Michael Harrison

CENTRICAL the demerged trading and supply arm of British Gas, hinted that it aimed to pay a dividend this year after coming under attack from shareholders yesterday for paying bonuses to executives when it was still making losses.

Shareholders attending Centrica's first annual meeting in London criticised the board over the £423,000 in bonuses paid to five executive directors last year despite the company making a £623m bottom line loss. One shareholder said: "Bonus payments have to be earned.

These five directors are not en-

titled to these huge bonuses." The Centrica chairman, Sir Michael Perry, replied that he "sincerely hoped this would be the last occasion when bonuses were paid without a bottom line profit being achieved". Earlier, Sir Michael told the

900 shareholders at the meeting that it would be "disgraceful" if there was any further slippage in the timetable for introducing competition into the domestic electricity market. Centrica has complained

that electricity companies have been allowed to attack its gas markets while it is prevented from entering their markets until competition begins this Sepsuppliers will have tied up their customers with attractive "dual fuel" deals to supply both gas and electricity. Figures released yesterday by the gas regulator Ofgas show that more than 1.5 million households have switched from

British Gas while a further 2

tember. The company fears

that by the time the electricity

market is opened up the local

million have signed contracts and are waiting to do so. Competition was extended vesterday to a further 3.2 million households in Wales, the West Midlands and Wiltshire. The whole of the country will be open to competition by 23 May.

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OUTLOOK ON WHY BRITISH PRODUCTIVITY IS SO MUCH LOWER THAN OUR COMPETITORS. DANGERS OF LEVERAGED BUYOUTS, AND LORD

WOLFSON'S VICTORY

OVER ARGOS

Why's productivity so low? I blame the bosses

I DON'T want to sound like some kind of "up the workers" bar room bore, but there were some quite shocking figures cited by Gordon Brown this week on Britain's continued record of poor productivity, and it seems to me that the blame for this can really only lie in one quarter - British management. According to the Chancellor, our productivity per capita in manufacturing is 20-30 per cent lower than Germany and 40 per cent lower than the US.

We also compare extremely unfavourably with poor old socialist France, overburdened, as everyone here seems to see it, with the social chapter, statutory working hours, long holidays and generally inflexible labour practices. Notwithstanding the ture of the ski slopes, a wonderful climate, the beach, the best food and wine in the world, and, of course, an hour or two in bed after lunch, the French still manage

The size of this gap is alarming enough; worse, it seems to be widening. It would appear that the Thatcherite revolution of the 1980s and the past five years of relative economic stability have done little or nothing to improve the underlying competitiveness of British manufacturing industry. All this is bad indeed, but it becomes more worrying still.

If the productivity gap was confined just to manufacturing, it would be possible to

view it as just part of old Britain, nothing it has failed to motivate and manage its to do with soaraway New Britain and its thriving creative and service industries. Not true, according to the Chancellor's figures. Even in the service sector, we fail to lead the others in any major industry. The Chancellor admits to being puzzled and has asked Margaret Beckett to look into the causes so that barriers to higher productivity, whether they be regulatory, fiscal or cultural, are removed.

Well here's my penny's worth. Mr Brown is too charitable. Since it is no longer possible to blame the unions, working practices, or even - post our newfound belief in the virtues of an independently set monetary policy - Britain's propensity to boom and bust, there can only really be one explanation; nor is it anything to do with regulatory barriers or fiscal policy. Poor competition law, combined with a failure in Government to deal adequately with entrenched monopoly and cartel, may be closer the mark, but fundamentally low productivity is about a failure in management.

There are many shining examples of world class British companies that knock the pants off the international competition, but on the whole British industry has failed to invest, it's failed to innovate, it's failed to bring about necessary economies of scale, and perhaps most crucially of all,

Meanwhile our manufacturing sector in particular has continued to give its workers above-average wage increases, while our bosses, citing the need to remain internationally competitive on pay, have remunerated themselves in many cases beyond the dreams of avarice. And still they continue to whinge on about the high pound and interest rates. Get real, guys.

I LUNCHED this week with Guy Hands, Nomura's head of principle finance. He's been in the news a lot of late, not least because of the reputed size of his earnings said to have been £50m last year. Over the past couple of years, he's bought businesses on behalf of his Japanese backers as diverse as pubs, betting shops and a train leasing company. He even tried to buy the Energy Group, before retreating on grounds of price. These are all stable businesses with reasonably predictable income streams.

What Mr Hands does is to leverage the equity in these companies by securitising the cash flow - in essence investors are sold rights in the form of bonds to a proportion of the company's income. The bonds alone will pay for the costs of the acquisition, and some. If all works out, the equity can be sold later at a thumping great profit too.

In the past I've expressed concern over this process, which I have regarded as a quite dangerous form of financial engineering. Mr Hands is a charming chap and he puts a convincing case. He half convinced me. in any case. Providing the process doesn't go too far, and is applied only to suitable businesses, it may be reasonably harmless. Certainly it is an ingenious way of pumping and realising value from a company.

However, there is plainly a point at which the process does go too far. Mr Hands may be getting the balance right, but as he and others admit, the competition for buyouts has become intense, driving up prices and increasing the degree of leverage required to hit the heady rates of return demanded of venture capitalists to alarming levels. It is not quite like the 1980s yet, but it's getting there.

The Nomura technique of securitisation, which many are now copying, is not quite the same thing as a leveraged buyout, but it is a variation of it. The buyout market as a whole is now reaching record levels in Europe, and in the US it is back to where it was in the 1980s. Typically a buyout specialist requires a 20 per cent-plus return per annum on his investment.

Since such returns cannot, after the built market of recent years, normally be achieved on conventional equity, it is done by leveraging the deal. Perhaps 50 per cent of the

purchase price gets funded from straight bank borrowings. Some 20 per cent is then paid for in the form of various classes of highyield lunk bonds, leaving the venture capitalist with 30 per cent equity. And hey presto, with a bit of luck there's your 20 per cent return on equity, even though to achieve it the business has to be run for cash.

If the cost of the deal goes up, or the return demanded is higher, then the amount of leverage has to be increased correspondingly. That's precisely what's happening at the moment across a whole raft of buyouts. As I say, this may not be the 1980s all over again yet, but we are

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FULL MARKS to Lord Wolfson, chairman of GUS. He called the Argos bid, helped it has to be said by some very highly paid advisers, just right. By going hostile from the outset, he paid less than he might have if he'd sought an agreed deal and, a gambler to the end, he refused to raise his price to a level that would guarantee success. As readers of these columns will know, we backed the Argos defence, but that doesn't mean we didn't accept the commercial logic of putting the Argos catalogue into GUS's unrivalled home shopping network. We just thought Argos shareholders might be selling themselves short. Too late now.

Decaux faces £1 m fine over monopoly

By Peter Thai Larsen

DECAUX, the French outdoor advertising company competition authorities for inquiries were under way. abuse of its monopoly position.

trand control a division of the istry, is currently investigating pany in the early Eighties. Decaur's dominant position in the market for street furniture such as bus shelters and toilets.

Although the investigation is ongoing, The Independent has seen a copy of the draft report drawn up by Jérôme Gallet, director general of the department. The report proposes that Decaux be fined FFr14.3m. (£1.3m) for abuse of its position in the French market.

Last month, Decaux launched a £475m bid for More Group, The Office of Fair Trading is examining whether the offer, which trumped an earlier £446m offer by Clear Channel. the US media giant, should be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Ou Thursday, the OFT extended the period it uses to examine the case until the middle of May.

The OFT refused to say why it had extended the period, or whether it was aware of the French investigation. However, an OFT spokeswoman said the watchdog was in regular contact with similar bodies in other countries: "We take evidence from anyone

who wants to give it to us." The draft report targets two specific practices of Decaux's which it calls "improper". First, it criticises the length of street; furniture contracts with local authorities, which usually run for 15 years. Second, the report - of his belief that the culture points out that additional clause clash between the two compaes in the contracts often allow nies would prove insurmount-

indefinitely without going through a competitive bid.

Jean-François Decaux, chairman and chief executive of Dewhich has tabled a bid for caux said This is a mischievous More Group, its UK rival, is story," adding that the compafacing a fine from the French ny would not comment while

use of its monopoly position. The investigation is not the The French department for first time that Decaux has been in mouble with the competition Economic and Finance Min- authorities who fined the com-

Decaux has long had a complete grip on the French streetfurniture market, only breached when More won the contract to supply street furniture to the City of Rennes last year.

A successful bid for More would give Decaux a similar position in the UK. The two rivals control 90 per cent of the streetfurniture market and between them have won all of the last 29. local authority contracts to have been awarded. However, Decaux argues that the market is merely a small part of the wider market for outdoor advertising, which includes billboards and

hoardings on the side of buses. Decaux yesterday said it had conducted a poll of local anthorities which showed only 10 out of 100 would oppose the bid for More Group. Clear Channel had earlier conducted two smaller surveys which ap-

concern about the bid. More Group has 21 per cent of the UK market for outdoor advertising, while Decaux has just a 3 per cent share.

peared to show widespread

Officially, More Group is maintaining a neutral line on the two competing bids pending the outcome of the OFT enquiry. However, More and Decaux are hitter competitors and Roger Parry, More's chief executive, has made no secret Decaux to extend the contract - able if a bid did succeed.



Back to front: Ray Kelvin, chief executive (right) and Lindsay Page, finance director of Ted Baker, the fashion retailer, which came to the stock market last summer. The company reported buoyant figures for last year with profits before flotation costs up 35 per cent to £5.75m. The shares, which have performed strongly, rose a further 8p to 177.5p.

The company said its womenswear range now accounted for 19 per cent of sales. It added that its boyswear brand, Teddy Boy, was now established and that its new brand Edward Baker was "showing promise." Turnover was up 47 per cent to £20.7m and there is a maiden dividend of 3p per share. Exceptional costs related to the flotation were £685,000.

Robinson steps into row over PFI

By Michael Harrison

THE Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson, yesterday stepped into a row over accounting standards that threatens to derail the Government's Private Finance Initiative.

Mr Robinson warned that he would not agree to proposals from Sir David Tweedie, head of the Accounting Standards Board, that would force the Government to include PFI projects in the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement.

At present PFI projects are financed off balance sheet because the private sector bears the capital cost and then charges the public sector a rental for the scheme, whether it be a road, a

hospital or a prison. Sir David has recommended that where the PFI is being used to procure an asset then the capital cost should be included in the PSBR. This, how-

ever, could kill off future PFI schemes as they would breach public spending controls.

Mr Robinson said that £2bn of schemes had been signed since the election, bringing the total to £8.9bn and he would not allow Sir David to "bring the whole PFI grinding to a halt".

He was speaking as the Treasury launched a scheme to give civil servants in depth training in handling PFI projects. Mr Robinson said the next drive would be to focus on PFI projects in the public sector covering health, schools, transport, waste and magistrates' courts.

In a speech to a PFI conference on Monday, Mr Robinson will say that all 29 recommendations in a report by Malcolm Bates last July on ways of improving the PFI have been implemented. The speech will also set out plans for developing the PFL further in the priority areas of health and education.

Pearson sells Future Publishing for £142m

By Nigel Cope City Correspondent

PEARSON, the Madame Tussauds to Financial Times media group, yesterday confirmed plans to sell its Future Publishing consumer magazines division to its management team for £142m.

Greg Ingham, Future Publishing's chief executive and Chris Anderson, the company's founder, are being backed in the deal by Apax Partners, the venture capital group. Future Publishing produces

a range of consumer titles in the computers, music, sport and entertainment sectors. Its magazines include PC Format, Total Guitar. Mountain Biking. Cross Stitcher and Total Film.

Apax said the deal was attractive because Future's magazines are in fast-growing markets. The deal will also form the platform for further expansion into Europe. Future already controls Edicorp, a consumer magazine publisher in France. Futurenet, its commercial web-

site, is also included. Commenting on the disposal. Marjorie Scardino, Pearson's chief executive, said it will allow the management teams of Future and Edicorp "to focus on what they do best - produce

great consumer magazines." Pearson acquired Future and Edicorp in 1994 and 1996 respectively. In 1997, the businesses made operating profits of £9.3m on turnover of £81.5m, Net assets were £4.5m

at 31 December. The deal comprises £125m in eash, with total acquisition costs amounting to £85m.

Chris Anderson will be nonexecutive chairman with Mr Ingham as chief executive. Mr Ingham said: "This is a terrific deal for the whole of the com-

MEPC to return £300m after £Ibn disposal programme

MEPC opened the way to return at least £300m to shareholders after completing the £1bn disposal of its overseas property assets yesterday. It sold a portfolio of office and industrial properties in the US consortium of US buyers for \$369m (£221m).

Last week it sold eight US shopping centres to General Growth Properties for \$871m (£523m), and in February it disposed of most of its Australian properties for around A\$500m (£196m). Work has begun on how to return capital to shareholders and the company is likely to make an announcement in the near future, MEPC's chief executive. Andrew Tuckey, said yesterday. Industry secretary Margaret Beckett vesterday decided not to refer the acquisition of some MEPC assets to Derwent Valley Holdings to the MMC.

De Benedetti exonerated

CARLO DE BENEDETTI, the Italian tycoon who was convicted seven years ago for involvement in the \$1.2bn collapse of Banco Ambrosiano, has been exonerated by an Italian supreme court. De Benedetti has fought to clear his name since he was convicted in 1991 with 32 others of causing the criminal bankruptcy. The case hit the headlines after the chairman, Roberto Calvi, was found hanging from Blackfriars Bridge in London. Yesterday. Mr Benedetti's lawyers said: "Justice has at last been done."

Laura Ashley disclosure

LAURA ASHLEY, the troubled fashion and home-furnishings retailer which announced a £44m rescue cash injection by a Malaysian conglomerate last week, has disclosed its directors remuneration, David Hoare, who replaced Ann Iverson as chief executive last year, will receive a salary of £200,000 plus share options yet to be disclosed. Richard Pennycook, the new finance director, will be paid £160,000 plus 700,000 share options at the current price of 30.5p and 250,000 at 100p. Ng Kwan Cheong of MUL the Malaysian investor, will receive £121,000 salary. Victoria Egan, who is joining the board, will be paid £200,000.

Co-Steel to sell up

Co-Steel, a Canadian industrial group, is to sell off its Sheerness plant in Kent following a call from a United Nations agency for a government inquiry into industrial relations at the works.

The highly unusual intervention of the UN's International Labour Office followed allegations by the TUC that union members were being intimidated. Senior management at the Sheerness plant, one of Europe's biggest mini-steel mills, were accused of "undue interference with the legitimate exercise of trade union rights". The Canadian company has told their unions that the works is being sold because it is losing money.

Glaxo halts septic-shock drug

GLAXO WELLCOME has cancelled development of 546C88. a drug for the treatment of septic shock, a condition which kills about half the 500,000 patients it affects each year in North America and Europe. The drug was at the last stage before being filed for regulatory approval. Glaso shares fell 32p to 1.558p.

Lawson retires from Barclays

LORD LAWSON, the tormer Chancellor of the Exchequer, will retire as a director of Barclays Bank on 30 April . Lord Lawson. 66, has been a non-executive director of the bank since 1990, shortly after he resigned from Baroness Thatcher's government.

'Failings' of power companies

STEPHEN LITTLECHILD, the electricity regulator, yesterday attacked power companies for serious failings in their attempts to deal with the effects of storms over Christmas and New Year. In a report to the minister for science, energy and industry, he said: "There was substantial failure by several companies as regards communication with customers, which may have extended repair times in some areas.

Grafton buys British Dredging

GRAFTON, Ireland's largest builders merchants, vesterday agreed to buy British Dredging for £25.1m. The acquisition of the Birmingham-based builders merchant is a big step in the Irish company's strategy of expending into the UK.

_	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Ted Baker(F)	20.7m (14.03m)	5 064m (1 117m)	7. 86p (0.31)	3 0 p (-)
Jaseph Holt (F)	30 76m (29 79m)	8 616m (6.393m)	213 5p (186 7p)	67.0p (59.0p
Pascoe's Group (F)	5.12m (5.56m)	-0.162m (0.177m)	-12,39p (4,2p)	n4
SBS Group (II)	11 3m (8 6m)	0 529m (0 353m)	5 2p (3 7p)	- (-)

MPs back Nationwide on conversion vote

By Andrew Verity

ONE HUNDRED MPs have ing societies fike Nationwide are attacked speculators for disrupting Nationwide's business General Election on their future by forcing it to hold its second... status every year. The issue of vote in a year on converting to conversion was fully debated at

a bank. The All-Party Building Sociclies Group today issued a statement saying it was "cxtremely regretful" that an election on the issue of conversion "year." was again taking place at the building society's AGM in July. Last July, a candidate who wanted the bank to convert was de-

of the group and Labour MP for Edmonton said: Buildnow facing what is in effect a the Nationwide last year when members voted overwhelmingly in favour of mutuality. It is regrettable that we are re-visiting this old ground again this

Michael Hardern, the former butler who was defeated in the election last year, and Andrew Muir, a recruitment con-

Andrew Lové, chairman run for election to Nationwide's board. For the first time. Mr Hardem has also succeeded in tabling a resolution which would require the building. society to convert.

Nationwide has campaigned for the Treasury to change regulations to stop votes on conversion going ahead every year. It complains that candidates only need the signatures of 50 eligible members to force the society to a vote. Nationwide has 4.5 million members.

Helen Liddell, the Treasury minister, last year changed the voting rules so that conversion feated by a two-thirds majority: sultant from Slough, will both required a vote of 75 per cent

in favour. But Nationwide said it was still possible for speculators to force it to hold a vote every year. Mrs Liddell has rejected Nationwide's request for a further change in the rules. which would boost the number of nominations from 50 to 500.

A spokesman for Nationwide said: "A ratio of 50 out of 4.5 million is just ridiculous. Helen Liddell has made it very clear that she doesn't want to consider the issues again but we haven't been able to understand

The 100 MPs said building societies should be valued as a competitive restraint on banks mortgage rate would inevitably

were cheaper because no dividends were paid to shareholders, the MPs said. In common with smaller huilding societies, Nationwide has repriced its variable mortgage rates in the past two years to show the benefits of being owned by policyholders. Nanonwide's variable rate mortgage is offered at 8.1 per cent. That compares with 8.7 per cent at banks and converted societies. Mr Love said: "If the Nationwide became a bank with shareholders to satisfy, their

which provided valuable diversity on the high street. Rates Building societies have in the past year seen a sharp increase in their market share at the expense of converted societies. The Halifax, for example. since converting last year, has seen its not lending shrink to a third of its former value.

Mr Love added: "Public support for building societies is evident in their growing share of the ... markets, MPs and peers in the all party building societies group are deeply disappointed that speculators are again seeking to disrupt the business of the Nationwide for their own short-term ends." [L The Burren:

It seemed fitting to meet on this bare landscape to the south of Galway, with its limestone mountains, its neolithic dolmens and abandoned medieval churches

"TAKE your time now, there's no its seasonal lakes which appear in hurry." said the big chap behind me in the airplane gangway as I struggled to stow my luggage. I did a double-take. This was Heathrow, the world's busiest airport. Clearly this character had already switched the psychological equivalent of time zones and had abandoned the met-

ropolitan impatience of the city. We were bound for the west coast of Ireland. As we flew towards the setting sun the river Severn glistened 31.000ft below like the skin sloughed off by some giant snake.

"Remember," someone had once told me. "Ireland is a foreign country where they happen to speak

I suppose I had known that when I decided to extend the brief of this column from Britain to the British Isles in order to visit John O'Donohue in the area of wild bare countryside known as The Burren to the south of Galway. It seemed important to meet him

For the past 30 weeks a book written by him has been No 1 in the best-seller list in Ireland and yet it has so far been barely heard of in-

that dark thing in the Celtic soul which finds its reflection in the strange beauty of The Burren's about it. landscape with its hald limestone mountains and sheltered valleys of pastureland, its neolithic dolmens rocky coastline there. We began our and abandoned medieval churches. walk by an old well, its base littered

the winter and vanish mysteriously

The book is called Anam Cara; Spiritual Wisdom from the Celtic World. Its subject is the human body and its psyche, friendship and solitude, ageing and death. Browsing through it in a bookshop you would be hard put to decide whether it was a profound work of modern mysticism or a piece of marketing

A cytic might assume it to be the Celtic equivalent of The Little Book of Calm whose soothing platitudes have earned it 64 weeks in the British best-sellers as the definitive religious text for our times offering, as one critic memorably put it. "the comforts of religion with none of the ag-

The only thing is that this Big Book of Green is not written by a pop psychologist but by a man who is a priest, poet, philosopher and Hegelian scholar. Was it. I wondered, the last gasp of Irish Catholicism, the spiritual equivalent of Riverdance?

When we met next morning in a hotel in Ballyvaughan I put that to him. O'Donohue, a burly bearded Did it. I wondered, speak only to bear of a man in his early 40s, laughed disarmingly and suggested that we walk by the ocean to talk

The Mountains of Gleninagh tower 1,000ft directly above the



Homely truths: Father John O'Donohue, whose book has been a best-seller in Ireland, reflects at Black Head, Co Clare Flotograph: Peter Macdamid.

tious. Ireland is a country where pantheism lingers beneath the Catholicism, even as the ghost of Gaelic loiters behind the English which is now the everyday lan-

O'Donohue's book is full of unchallenged references to the old ways - with stories like the Bean Si (banshee) who cries for someone about to die or the man who stumbled upon a fairy village and stayed a few hours only to find when he returned home he had been missng a fortnight.

It is not the stuff you would expect from a Catholic priest. "I wantcritique it," O'Donohue responded.

with the offerings of the supersti- "I don't ask 'Are these existent he meant when he had written of stincts were as important as intellect

"I'm just asking what such stories tell us of what is missing from our present daily reality. The poverty of so much modern discussion is that it has no such glances at the corners of the mystery of human existence."

The limits of our language are the limits of our world; to enrich one we must attend to the other. "Look how the light changes over the sea," he said suddenly. The steely grey-blue sky had taken on the eerie transhicent quality which I had noticed across the bay at twilight the night

As the waves crashed in a white ed to celebrate that world, not turmoil upon the solid rock along the sea strand I caught a glimpse of what

Yet I was determined to resist. Wasn't all this mere weirdy-beardy New Age romanticism? As for Celtic spirituality, wasn't the truth that the Celts were an alarmingly vigorous people whose poetry betrayed a life dedicated to cattle raids: in a world where existence was. hard, mean and short?

lence of the stone."

tween the sacred and the secular or want them to see the flickering light the body and the soul. It was in time a dif their

how for millions of years an ancient or institutions. True, there were the conversation has occurred between wars, suggestions of human sacrifice the chorus of the ocean and the si- and actions like planting eggs to poison an enemy's land. "Every gift has a shadow," he said, "and a real conversation with the past would deal

with all that." But all the signs are that the stress epidemic at the heart of modern life is a spiritual crisis.

"So what I was trying to do was and fighting, feasting and drinking, to offer a positive creative celebration of the spiritual to encourage people trapped by materialism in Well, yes, said O'Donohue. But tives of quiet despair, haunting it was a world with no boundary be- loneliness or massive isolation. I

heady mixture of myth, poetry, philosophy and homely truism.

In places its short sentences - like a series of connected epigrams read with unsatisfying vagueness. O'Donohue's fecund supply of poetic metaphor can be cloying, like eating a box of chocolates all in one go. In places they are undiscrimipating - his thoughts about the darkest hour being before dawn made insthink only of that old song by The Mamas and The Papas, "Dedicated to the one I love" (he had the good grace to groan and laugh when I told

All this made me resist the text But as I read on I found I had suspended my scepticism and given myself over to it. I began to deal with his vision in its own terms and then allowed myself to find parts of it profound and moving.

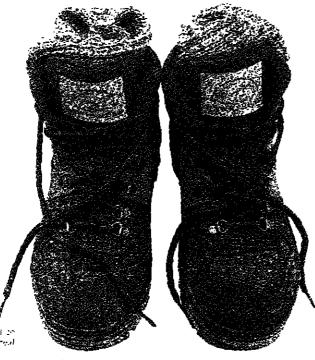
There was something of the same mixture in O'Donohue himself. As we walked the words poured from him in a torrent of erudition, self-deprecating humour, vivid in ages and unexpected insight. Friendship offers a challenge to the blind spot in the psyche; in nature we never see our own faces, others see them for us," he said at one

After two hours walk by a rocky shore dotted with primroses and with hedges white with hawthorn blos som, we came across a group of wild goats with their kids. When the goats come down the mountain it's a sign of bad weather," he said. "The people of the old times knew by instinct and observation what we have. to consciously learn," he said. It prompted him to thoughts on how interpretation has replaced the te in the flat two-dimensionality of o second-hand modern life. But the main point was that it was about to rain and that we should turn back.

We walked through the shower back to the pub and a feast of cysters and Guinness. "The dominant trend in the 20th century is that established by logical positivism: only that which can be empirically verified is true. That appeals to the English sense of pragmatism.

Findland is a land of systematic philosophy, Ireland is a place ofinvention, rediscovery, rearrange-

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TOMORROW IN THE SEVEN-SECTION



THE WORLD AT HIS FEET

Ronaldo is the greatest and most expensive footballer on earth. But what is he really like? Frans Oosterwijk spent five years finding out

- The double life of Gwyneth Paltrow
- Part three of the ultimate guide to seafood

■ Does fat make you forgetful?

Week in.

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TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT



PICTURE OF THE WEEK Rose leaf unfurled in the early morning dew, by Brian Harris. To order a 12x9in print (price £15) call 0171-293 2534

NT Week in, week out

William Hartston worries about the sins people might be committing with a reindeer in the front of an ice-cream van

and bike magazine Redline this week revealed that 35 per cent of respondents said they had had oral sex performed on them while driving, and 8 per cent had had full sex. Furthermore, 24 per cent said they had driven a car at more than 140mph on a British road, 27 per cent had : a minimum of 26 per cent keep their seatsteered a car with their feet, 20 per cent belts on while having oral sex. It's good had successfully chatted up someone in another car, and 33 per cent had never had an accident. Making certain assumotions, we may deduce this suggests that more than one in 100 of our young drivers may have had a particularly nasty ecident while having oral sex performed on them at 140mph when steering with their feet. And that could throw some light on the rest of the week's news.

For a start, there was another survey - this time from the RAC - which revealed that only 49 per cent of adults wear seatbelts in the back of cars. Well, with 24 per cent driving at 140 mph, and another 27 per cent steering with their

49 per cent prefer a bit of bondage on the back seat?

The RAC report also claimed that "only a small minority" of drivers (8.5 per cent) and passengers (9 per cent) risk not belting up in the front. That means that to know that the safe sex message is getting through at last. All this information enabled us to put

in better perspective a report from Florida of a traffic warden sticking a parking ticket on a car without noticing that a man was dying inside having been tied up and shot in the head. After all the other embarrassing things they might have seen going on in cars is it any wonder that traffic wardens just want to get on with their job while averting their gaze. from the inside of the vehicle?

There was better news in a drinkdriving case in Finland, where the judge said that the man who rammed his car

A survey of 18- to 40-year-olds by the car feet, is it any surprise that the remaining into a Santa Claus sleigh that was being pulled by a reindeer last Christmas deserved leniency. His surprise at seeing Father Christmas and the reindeer was, in the judge's opinion, partly to blame for the crash. And if you have ever seen an elderly bearded man in a sexually excited

state trying to steer a reindeer with his Poland, a computer program has been feet, I am sure you will agree with the judge. The driver of the car was aged 69,

incidentally. There was good news for anyone who gets up to any of the above sinful practices and feels the need to repent. In

INSIDE



Tea tops in Darjeeling 48 hours in Athens

TRAVEL

GARDENING SPORT

London Marathon: Britain's challenge Colombia: where drugs and football unite

Can Arsenal repeat the Double feat of 1971?

confessing for the next three months, because the road to Hell is blocked by repair work. The little town of Hell in Michigan (one of the two Hells on earth - the other is in Norway) has lost its link to the outside world as the town's main bridge is being repayed. However good

the intentions of the repaying of the bridge to Hell, it is causing traffic chaos and keeping tourists away. "It'll close the whole town," said Hell Chamber of Commerce president Jim Ley. "That's where

our money comes from. It'll kill us." Is it any wonder, then, that Pope John Paul II this week said that although the

designed to aid confession. It is said to be

"based on the prayer book" and poses the

their sins. Individual sins are listed under

the Ten Commandments, with a ques-

tionnaire asking whether they have been

gests that sinners need not worry about

News from Michigan, however, sug-

committed or not.

end of the world would certainly come some day, it was useless to try to predict when. "Illusory and misleading" was how user 104 questions to help keep track of he described attempts to predict the date of Armageddon - and no wonder! After all, it can hardly happen when the road to Hell is down, and when that's fixed, the millennium bug will probably have buggered up all that useful Judgement Day evidence on confessional computers. It could take years to get it all fixed in time

for the end of the world. Finally, in Stafford Township, New Jersey, an ice-cream man, Jeffrey Cabaniss. has won a court battle to keep playing his favourite song, "Turkey in the Straw". through his van's loudspeakers. Local residents had complained that the song was "discordant", "monotonous" and "a form of torture". The judge ruled that hearing other people's music was one of the "inconveniences of living in a free society". The percentage of ice-cream vendors who enjoy oral sex while listening to "Turkey in the Straw" is, sadly, unknown.

Jog your mind

HAVING A GOOD ARGUMENT about things that matter is important to you. But how do you keep up with the latest views? What do you say about the Ted and Sylvia show? Are you up to speed on the crash in the East? And who would you say was the 20th century's most fabulous woman?

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CALDER

Twenty months, and counting, in particular, the travel industry is counting on buge earnings from the global collective madness that will accompany the arrival of the year 2000. But anyone who cares about the world, and travelling, should be seriously bugged by the millennium. Not on philosophical grounds - though the concept of celebrating the anniversary of the date when a figure, not worshipped by most of the world's population, wasn't bont, taxes credulity - but on the dreadful distortions caused by our fixation on this utterly arbitrary date.

I love travelling, and I love parties, and if in 1999 you'd like to combine the two then allow me to suggest some possibilities: Cornwall, 11 August, when a genuine astronomical event - the only total solar eclipse that most Britons will experience in their lifetime - will be accompanied by much jollity: Macau, 21 December, when Europe's colonial grip on Asia will be eased by Portugal's handover of its tiny possession to China; Panama, 31 December, when the United States will revoke its control of the Canal Zone, the symbolic link between Atlantic and Pacific that is being liberated for the 21st century. Handily, the ceremony is scheduled for lunch time on New Year's Eve. which should leave the evening free for copious consumption of the inappropriately named Soberana beer.

On second thoughts, don't go to Panama. Don't get involved in the highly stressful and expensive jostling for millennium position. Pent-up demand for trains, boats, planes and rooms is likely comprehensively to outstrip supply, as we move towards the peak of the world's greatest-ever travel frenzy. And don't blame the airlines, hotels and tourist boards for cashing in. If we travellers are mug enough to buy the image of a once-in-alifetime opportunity to visit a place which (before and after the millennium) will be as wonderful as ever, then why shouldn't the travel industry profit? Because the one postmillennial certainty is a huge slump in travel.

It's the Hong Kong syndrome. We bought the myth that the former British colony had to be visited before the handover to the People's Republic last June. We also bought the unspoken corollary that Hong Kong wouldn't be worth the trip once it was part of China. Result: the cost of a week's holiday in Hong Kong in April 1998 has halved, compared with a year ago. For real bargains, wait for the first few months of 2000.

To find out where not to go, you could consult a brace of books, the first in a flood of millennium travel guides. Reading between the lines of The Millennium: the Rough Guide by Nick Hanna (£5) and Richard Knight's Millennium Guide (Trailblazer, £4.99) will suggest the places to visit once all the Date Line tourists have gone home. Tonga, for example, where the International Date Line Hotel has been fully booked for a decade; I bet you can get a good rate on the night of 31 January 2000. Or Fiji, which will be an anticlimactic archipelago following its curious millennial wheeze of illuminating the 180degree line of longitude to make it visible from space. Closer to home, expect a glut of cheap Caribbean cruises during the postholiday hangover.

So if these are the places where you should go, but not for the millennium, where should you be on New Year's Eve 1999? With friends and family, of course.

If location really is important, then try the one place which has so far cluded the compilers of millennial meanderings: Cleethorpes. The Lincolnshire resort straddles the Greenwich meridian, and usually has plenty of hotel rooms available over the winter. Failing that, make for Caroline Island, part of Kiribati in the South Pacfic, whose government has unilaterally shifted the Date Line thousands of miles east. Perhaps Cleethorpes could try it.

The new books continue the travel trend of long, rambling acknowledgements. Richard Knight thanks 23 individuals (including Simon "Colonel" Doody and Geraint "Grunt" James) plus his family and a myriad of millennium organisations, tourist boards and travel companies. Nick Hanna covers the same terrain, but singles out the Aldred Road Hotel for "unstinting hospitality, sanctuary and very reasonable room rates".

The travel desk here has few rules. One is that all travel and accommodation must be paid for at full price. Another is that if a story deals exclusively with a single street. the accompanying photograph should be of that thoroughfare rather than of a road some 20 miles away. Last week, for my story on Broadway in Los Angeles we broke rule two: as many of you spotted, the photograph was of Hollywood Boulevard, Sorry.



Dropping a clanger: metal is poured into a bell mould at John Taylor's foundry in Loughborough

The ring leaders

On the stroke of midnight on 31 December 1999, and again 12 hours later, thousands of bell-ringers will put Britain into a glorious, tuneful frenzy, Across the nation ringers will be welcoming the year 2000 with rousing peals.

The preparation for this is certainly no mean feat. For some it has meant lengthy restoration projects for their church bell towers, while others have ordered new bells especially for the occasion-the Millennium Commission has pumped £3m towards the £6m project co-ordinated by the Central Council of Church Bells. And, relatively speaking, there has been a rush to get unringable bells restored and new bells cast in time for the big day.

All of which has brought a welcome boost for business at the largest bell foundry in the world, John Taylor's in Loughborough. It has also brought an increase in visitors to the small museum attached to the works. The foundry itself usually makes about 70 bells a year, but Alan Berry, the managing dirend of a £205,000 tower restoration project and a ector, reckons that millennium orders have almost major fundraising appeal. And indeed it was a splendoubled production. "Towards the end of last did occasion for them. "It's wonderful to see, beyear things started to move," he said. "We seem cause this is the completion of our project on the to be about twice as busy as before.

Almost every time a church bell is cast at the foundry the parishioners of the client church are keen to share in the moment in history when "their" around for the next such occasion, since a bell is expected to last for at least 500 years). Their visit

If you want to fly anywhere for the millennium you

have to book now? Wrong, In fact, if Virgin Atlantic

is right, it would be sensible not to fly anywhere at all over that period. The "millennium bug" could

put aircraft, air traffic control and reservation sys-

tems worldwide into an almighty millennial spin. "We want to be assured that our airports are going to be

functioning safely before we start organising flights."

said a Virgin Atlantic spokesman emphatically. "Then

we will start looking at the commercial opportuni-

As Britain makes plans to celebrate the millennium in style church bells newspapers of the day covered the founding and are already in heavy demand all around the country. Louise Duffield visits the world's biggest bell foundry to see the preparations

usually encompasses a tour of the works, a look has hardly changed over hundreds of years. It can around the small museum, and the big moment it- take not just days, but weeks - from the casting to self when molten metal is poured into the unique the fine tuning when tiny "shavings" are pared away mould that will produce the new bell.

Therefore, to get the most out of a visit to the bell foundry it is a good idea to link in with a group scheduled to watch a casting. I duly called the museum's curator and arranged my visit to coincide with that of parishioners from All Saints church, Kilham, near Driffield. They had travelled from East Yorkshire to Leicestershire to see two new bells coming to life. For them it marked the beginning of the

actly the same. This is because not all bell-making bell is made (after all, they are hardly likely to be processes will be running at the same time. But what

from inside the bell. At Taylors, the machine that carries out the tuning was designed and built in 1895.

Our guided trip around the foundry was, of course, the highlight of the visit - greatly adding to the exhibitions in the little museum. This, as it is so small, is run single-handedly and tends to be shut when the curator is giving a tour. Visitors are advised to telephone to find out museum opening The Bell Foundry Museum, Freehold Street, Loughtimes, the schedule for castings and when behindthe-scenes tours are planned.

The museum itself is fairly basic and is centred on three rooms which feature the history of bell

ing and tuning a bell can be, and how the process St Paul's Cathedral, Lengthy articles in the national

transporting to London of the 16-ton bell, which cost £3,000. Not all the foundry's customers were - and are - so well known, but bells from Taylors can be seen in churches, public buildings and companies all over the world.

Meanwhile, molten metal and glass cases may be part of the mix of a visit here, but this is no handsoff experience. After hearing and seeing so much about bells during a tour of the works, it comes as a relief to be able to ring some of the examples in the museum (you can't help feeling that there's something about bells that say "please ring us"). And as you do so, you'll get a gentle foretaste of the glorious sounds of the millennium celeb-

borough, Leicestershire (01509 23 3414) is open Tuesday-Friday and summer Saturdays, 10am-12.30pm. 1.30pm-1.30pm Sundays, and winter Saturdays by arrangement. It is closed between Christmas and New founding and take a look back over the years since Year, and on Good Friday and Easter Tuesday. As lower, said Sue Dawson, chairman of the restora- 1/84 when the laylor family first became involved there is only one staff member, the museum is also tion appeal and the Friends of Kilhain Church. in the business. For almost 200 years the foundry closed at unscheduled times so it is advisable to check No two tours of the foundry are likely to be ex-remained in their hands, until the death of Paul Lea that it is open before planning a visit. The curator will also give details of tours and castings, which are held One of the high points in the foundry's story irregularly. Admission: museum, El adults, 50p chilthe tour will reveal is just how lengthy a job mak- came in 1882, when it cast Great Paul to hang in dren aged five to 15. Tours and museum entry, £3 adults, £1.50 children.

New year's revelations

Will the millennium bug cause travel chaos? It's possible. So for the moment the best thing to do is sit back and relax, writes Sue Wheat

ties." Other airlines point out that bookings cannot be made anyway until 1 January 1999, as their reserv-	What airlines say they will do about travel over New Year 1999				
ation systems take bookings only 364 days in advance.	Company	Taking bookings?	Special plans?	Phone sumber	
A spokesman at United Airlines said: "We have 2,000	Air New Zealand	Tentatively' - our computer isn't set up for it yet.'		0181 741 2299	
flights a day, and sell more than 100 million seats a year – to mess with that system so that we can book	American Alrines	Bookings start 1 Jan 1999	No plans as yet	0345 789789	
an extra six months in advance is a major programming exercise." So, if you want to spend the millennium out of the UK, relax. You could even wait to September	British Airways	Bookings start 1 Jan 1999. Advance reservations possible. Advance reservations possible. Attlemnum bug a pritorpy, and are confident it will be safe. "We are determined to fly over the New Year". Concorde charter office have watering list.	Not particularly. Normal cheap feres may not be available	0345 222111	
1999 and reserve a seat to Paris on Eurostar, for which bookings can be made a maximum of 90 days	Virgen Atlantic	Definite 'no' – because of the possibility of the 'Millermium Bug' threatening safety	No	01293 747747	
in advance. Alternatively, charter a Eurostar train	Unded Airlines	Bookings start 1 Jan 1999	No. Millennium dug a priority	0181 990 9900	
to the French capital - if you have enough mates. Christmas and New Year are normally the	Air France	Not yet Concords: chanered by a US charler company	No.	0181 742 6600 -	
highest of high seasons for airlines, hotels and cur rental companies. Could it be that prices are be-	British Micland	Bookings start 1 Jan 1999	No	D345 564554	
ing withheld deliberately to maximise earnings from the millennium? Most companies The Independent talked to denied anything so calculated, and main- tained it was just "too early to think about it".	Eurostar	No. Will be 90 days in advance as normal. Can charter Eurostar.	Full Xmas and New Year service: 20 departures to Paris – 760 seats per train. Woo't run Xmas day or over New Year's Eve	0345 303030 Charter sales: 0171 922 4542	

But the fact that British Airways has received a staggering 250,000 inquiries from people who want to celebrate the millennium aboard Concorde shows that lots of potential revellers have thought about it. A dream for many people is to celebrate the millennium three times: in London, on board Concorde in the mid-Atlantic, and on arrival at New York.

Hotels are several months ahead of the carriers. Some are already taking bookings or will be releasing details this summer. This means that prospective millennium globe-trotters may need to book their hotels before they have secured a flight.

If you don't want to take the risk of either not being able to get a flight or not being able to fly because of the millennium bug, then it looks as if home may be a good place to stay. English Country Cottages still has 2,500 cottages available - and all you'll have to battle with is traffic or trains.

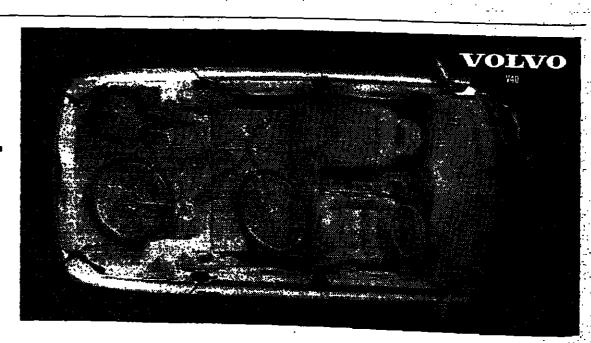
To secure both transport and accommodation in one go, the best option is probably a cruise. Which is presumably why Princess Cruises are already fully booked for trips to the Caribbean. Other Caribbean cruise lines will be releasing their itineraries within the next few months.

Keith Betton, head of corporate affairs for the Association of British Travel Agents, seems to think that millennium fever is pretty much media hype anyway. "Most people are going to stay at home with their friends and family," he said. "I don't think that the millennium means very much to the average person."

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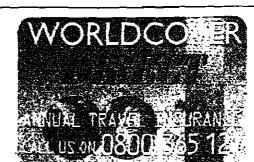
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Tiffin territory

Forget the snow-capped mountains and the Buddhist prayer flags, Darjeeling is really the Crawley of the Himalayas, writes Simon Calder as he takes tea and savours the romance of the place



colour and strength as it flooded towards up the Himalayan foothills.

the music was from that summer's Concert Daintily decorated with cream and green for Bangladesh. Athena Ally was quite the most exotic person at school: she had a Welsh mother and an Indian father, and had been born in Darjeeling. That the family now lived in Crawley served only to heighten the Appeal of her origins to a spotty Sussex youth like me. But it was to be another quarter-century before a hilariously overloaded and underpowered steam train wheezed with relief as it deposited me and several hundred other seekers.

after divine tea. Darjeeling isn't like India. Grey of stone and grey of sky, it's like Buxton-a high old town at railway line, marooned sufficiently far from the rest of the world for a

mid-century, middle-class layer of middle England to have settled like . Tibetan Refugee Self-Help Centre, but a duvet between the hills and the clouds: - there's a good chance you'll end up instead

But unlike Derbyshire, Darjeeling rewards the visitor with the sight of decorative Buddhist prayer flags and frequent glimpses of Kanchenjunga, the world's third-highest pear. The snow-covered massif seems to follow you around the sinuous streets and lurching hills of the town, reminding you that the

European is here on sufferance. The municipal monarch commands the curious neck of territory through which India squeezes on her way to the north-east- next 40 years, concluding with the cheerern hill states. The tortuous frontiers fully misspelt GF Hopland (Graham speak of all kinds of political shenanigans in a part of the world where Bhutan, Sikkim. China, Nepal and Bangladesh crowd in on. India. Until recently you needed a special

permit to visit Darjeeling. It was a frontier dispute that drew British officials here in 1828. They spotted the potential of a crescent-shaped ridge as a hill station to relieve expatriates sweating in Calcutta. The North East Frontier Railway - a

I's performance possessed balletic pre-sturdier title than its "Toy Train" nickname cision. The brew described a perfect arc -was completed in 1882, linking Darjeeling from the spout, a bridge almost as pale as with the vast iron web of India's rail network the bone china crockery which it linked. by way of an improbable switchback that al-With a fluid elegance, the liquor gathered - lows a Scottish locomotive to claw its way

the rim. Whispers of steam escaped from As with Crawley, a new town was rapidly the smoky brown surface, mimicking the created It was fitted out with all manner of wisps dancing from Athena's cigarette. In colonial accourrements that you might think the background, Ravi Shankar coaxed a im- singularly out of place at 7,000ft, but which plausible jostle of scales from his sitar. are strangely comforting - notably the Win-This entrancement took place in 1972; damere Hotel, which crowns the ensemble.

> paint, in the manner of a seaside boarding-house, the hotel cossets guests with hot-water bottles ~ just the sort of security. you need as you stare across the vast valley to Kanchenjunga, for which the term "brooding" could have been coined. A London doctor has already booked three rooms for 31 December 1999. "We cannot think of a nicer place in which to welcome the new millennium," says a fax

pinned up in the hotel. The visitor is provided with many maps of Darjeeling, painted over any spare wall beneath slogans such as "come as a guest, go as a friend". Clumsy cartography, though, is a benefit in Darjeeling, You may set

off to find your way to the. at the gripping Himalayan Mountain Insti-tute. The late Tenzing Norgay, half of the first successful conquest of Everest in 1953, used to head the institute; the equipment used by him and Sir Edmund Hillary looks pitiably ancient compared with the gear belonging to

those trekking around Darjeeling. The institute majors on the spell cast by the world's highest mountain, and lists all those who reached the summit over the Hoyland, who writes for these pages,

climbed Everest in 1993). As the relief map of the Himalayas shows. Everest stands 140 miles away, on the frontier between Nepal and Tibet. And if you rise at 3am, you may see it. A fleet of Ambassador taxis departs Darjeeling at this ungodly hour each morning, winding up eight miles away atop Tiger Hill. Along with a thousand others, I shivered while the



sun made up its mind to dazzle us with the dawn vision of the Himalayas. You don't need good binoculars to realise that this magical field of vision contains four of the world's five highest peaks (K2, the missing

mountain, is hidden away in Pakistan). Humble and hungry, you stumble down the track back to town - and discover that this is one part of India where hitch-hiking is (a) accepted and (b) easy. A bunch of soldiers, off duty from guarding miscellaneous frontiers, deposited me outside the railway station, where a map misdirects visitors to the Happy Valley Tea Estate.

The tea bushes clinging to the hillsides around Darjeeling form an ocean of green, rippling in the breeze and speckled with tiny figures who wade through at shoulder height. The pickers' taut brown faces study the leaves intently as they snip away and stash the precious crop in what look like outsize laundry baskets borne on the back. The harvest is unloaded at a rustic factory, where visitors may poke around as the leaves are dried, rolled, fermented and graded: Golden Supremo, Supremo. Broken Orange Pekoe, Family Mix - and. right at the bottom of the pot, tea-bags.

to the town, you will be gasping for a cup from the train that brought me to Darjeeling introduced himself and shared a pot with gentle Ghurka, turned out to be more conthought, and several shades away from the perfect pale gold that I remembered. Family Mix, perhaps? Indisputably refreshing, nonetheless, endowing the afternoon's ambles with increased vigour. As you pass the Holy Angels School for the Under-

By the time you have clambered back - privileged, you realise that anyone able to visit Darjeeling is indisputably overpriviof tea. At Didi's tea shop, the Second Guard leged. Athena, meanwhile, still lives in

me. The ceremony, and the company of this Simon Calder paid £1,300 for an inclusive tour taking in Delhi. Jaipur, Agra, Varanasi, genial than the cup - a touch too bitter, 1 Calcutta and Darjeeling. This included flights to and from Delhi on Air India, and trains and planes within the country.

Air India serves Darjeeling ica in flight bitt only to business class and first class passengers. Economy class passengers are served Taj Mahal blended tea. mostly Assam.

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Coffee, coffee everywhere, and not a drop to drink

- a mellow, rich state that runs up the south-eastem up of India in the same way Chile does in South America - and I was sitting in a wicker armchair behind, the green Western Ghats that border Kerala and the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu rise. up to the spectacular Cardamom Hills. And all over these steep, rolling mountains, dotted between cool hill stations, are plantations of cardamon. cocoa, rubber, cashews, tea - and coffee. -

You don't usually go to India for the coffee. but I was on a personal quest. Spiritual enlightcament, cultural enrichment, even trekking seemed tasks too ambitious for a two-week holiday. I was here to rest - and to find out about the local brew.

I had fantasized about a rich, aromatic cup of dark, "interesting" coffee. Something that would

would scared exceptible and perhaps, in a small coffee house for plantation workers, I would triumphantly buy some beans - after a little persussion - and stake them at any unbelievers. already I was a little desperate, as any caffeine addict will understand. I had been served Nescafé per sent change ("to bring out the flavour") in an- great wafts of nectar through the car window, and other and I handly dured brave a cup in this beach

"Tex or coffee?" It was breakfast time in Kerala Never mind the elephants, what about the caffeine? Miranda Haines

sets off in search of the perfect Indian brew in Kerala

looking out over the Arabian Sea. A few miles menu. Third time lucky, I reasoned: "A cappuccino please." It came, half an hour later, in a glass: milky. a faint taste of crushed celery and a hint of a light brown colour. I quickly ordered a freshly squeezed orange juice and decided that it was a good time to push into the hills to see if the people who grow

the stuff also enjoy drinking it. Quite by chance, on my first night in the Surya Sumudra Garden hotel near Kovalam, I had met Simon, an Indian estate owner and occasional guide. "I have an organic coffee farm," he told me, "I will take you there - and then to Perivar Wildlife Park, where you can see wild elephant."

Never mind the elephant. Can you find me a good cup of Indian coffee?" I asked, a little more bluntly than was intended. "Yes, yes. We can drireally give an Indian kick-start to every day. F ve up to my estate on Saturday, as I have to pay my workers' wages, and I will show you everything." Simon and I set off in his jeep from Varkala,

over the hercely hot and bone-rattling roads, stop-A modest antinion, but it was day three and ping only to buy mangoes, cigarettes, and fresh coconcus to quench our thirst. Gradually we climbed higher, passing forests of rosewood, teak, sandalpowder with for water in a five-star hotel, pow-wood, eucalyptus, flowering trees, pepper vines, dered coffee from the local market mixed with 50 cardamom, bananas, papayas and roses. I smelt

saw green peppers laid out to dry in the sun. but restaurant in Markab, even if it did call itself. At Mundakayam we stopped for lunch in a

tation. Gashes could be seen in the trunks and plastic bags fluttered beneath to collect the sap.

We turned off the perilous mountain road just before Pirmed to reach Simon's 40-acre estate. When he bought it five years ago, the estate had fallen into jungly disrepair. This year, he was proud to announce, they had produced nine tons of coffee; next year he hopes for 20. He will also have built a small bungalow for guests who wish to stay in this unusually secluded area.

"I don't use chemicals to speed up my crop. I want my coffee to be completely natural and organic, even though there is no real demand for or recognition of it on the Indian market. We have planted five different types, Rabest being the main one, and Liberia which is used for bordering to stop hillside erosion." "Do you drink your own coffee?" I ventured. "Yes, you will have some at home, in Tiruvalla."

The estate manager, a tiny, wiry young man. accepted the wages and handed Simon a parcel of fresh onions to take home to his wife, Maria.

The next day we travelled back down the valley to Tiruvalla to stay the night in their spacious traditional wooden house. A large white church opposite the front gate was built by Simon's family and donated to the village. Just up the road in a Hindu temple, a kathakali dance - the stun-The Italian Case, and cappuccino was top of the colonial club settled in the middle of a rubber plan-

gins in an ancient form of martial arts, kaluripayattu – was to last until 5am next day.

At dinner that night I chatted for hours on the veranda with Maria and her first cousin, Roshun, about what schools they should send their children to, how hard their husbands worked, and the weather (a heat wave and a drought this year). After dinner, we had a powdered coffee that tasted like all the other stuff I was by now resigned to drinking. Maria explained: "Today, we took our beans, which we had sun-dried ourselves, to the mill for them to roast and grind. But it was on strike. We will have to wait."

The next day I drank tea for breakfast to wash down a masala dhosa and set off excitedly to see the wild elephants in Perivar Wildlife Park.

Miranda Haines is the editor of Traveller, the magazine for members of the Wexas Travel Club (annual membership £43.98; call 0171-589 3315). She paid £190 return for a chance flight from Gatwick to Trivandrum on Monarch, through Wexas, and stayed at the Surya Sumudra Beach Gurden Hotel (00 91 471 480 413; fax: 481 124), paying \$80 (£50) per night; this includes the transfer from the airport and a bed in a traditional wooden Kerala

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We all know the north-east of Corfu from books, writes Linda Cookson and honey and yoghurt are still for tea

Last of the lotus eaters

The scenery is unspoilt beauty, dramatic. The sea. deep turquoise, is fringed by steep wonded slopes. And behind the dark green curtain of cypresses towers the greyness of Mount

A narrow coastal road clings to the hillside several hundred metres above the shore. It winds through silvery olive groves and - in early summer - through a purple blaze of wild cyclamen. irises and orchids. On the shoreline below, enchanting cowes, villages and anchorages emerge from behind successive headlands to form. necklace-like, a string of little jewels along the water's edge.

This is the north-east coast of Corfu – 12 miles of paradise, stretching from Barbati (16 miles north of Corfu Town) to just short of Kassiopi. Forget all your prejudices about what mass tourism has done to most of the rest of Corfu. Forget discos, lager louts, chicken 'n' chips, tattoos and Union Jack T-shirts. The north-east coast is

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"daffodil-yellow villa" in the early Thirties, making sorties by boat along the coastline in the Sea Cow or the raffish Boode-Bumtrinket. Gerald Durrell's book My Family and Other Animals is rich in its evocative descriptions of the area. And this coast is also where his brother. Lawrence Durrell, spent a year and a half just before the Second World War, living "in an old fisherman's house" in Kalami and writing Prespero's Cell, his definitive guide to Corfu. His house - the White House - is still there by the waterside. The ground floor is now a taverna. The apartment above it is available for holiday lets: it comes complete with its original dining-table and the desk where Dur-

Of course, some things have changed since the time of the Durrell brothers. For a start. there's now a road in the area - although travelling by boat remains by far the best way of seeing the coastline, since so much of the more spectacular scenery is not visible from the road.

This is where the Durrell family lived in their But it's still somehow reassuring for sentimentalists that the Durrells' own home ground should have remained largely unsullied. The tiny horseshoe bay of Kouloura, landing-stage for many of Gerald's youthful boating adventures, is still one of the loveliest and most unspoilt waterside settings in Greece, with its single taverna overlooking fishing boats at anchor, and a small, undeveloped beach at the edge of the pine grove

The pace of life, as you'd imagine, is quiet. This is not the place for an action holiday, or indeed for high culture. Many people never even make it back to Corfu town until it's time for the plane home. Life revolves in the morning around trips to the nearest outcrop of shops to buy fresh bread for breakfast. In the daytime you'll probably find yourself heading for a white pebble beach somewhere, to take a plunge into the invitingly clear water or to read a book in the shade of a eucalyptus tree. In the evening, unless committed to home cooking, you'll take root in a waterside taverna amid lemon, fig and walnut trees and sample the (admittedly limited) delights of Greek cuisine.

lt's nicest, as I mentioned, to take to the water for your potterings. Small boats with outboard motors can be hired by the day at Nissaki, Kalami and Agios Stefanos (no relation to a resort of the same name on the west coast of the island). A week's boat hire comes to about £200 - roughly the same as car hire.

Meanwhile, everyone has their own favourite tavernas to visit. Mine are Mitsos Taverna in Nissaki (run by Agatha and her family for the past 30 years), and Toula's Taverna at Agni Bay.

Most visitors to the north east rent villas or apartments. Part of the pleasure of holidaying here. is to be able to play house among the olive groves, breakfasting al fresco on yoghurt and honey, and tippling retsina on the terrace as the sun goes over the yard-arm. Besides, the key attraction of the area is that there's no mass tourism to speak of. The Durrells would still recognise the place.

A marathon to Marathon

Simon Calder finds a few hurdles on the run through Greece

The London Marathon takes place tomorrow, but of course it really starts not in Blackheath but in Greece. On the wedge of land that pokes like a . bad tooth into the Aegean, Athens resembles a had case of decay. The damage has not yet spread across the peninsula to the ancient site of Marathon. The scene of the famous victory in 490BC - when 9,000 Greeks plus 1,000 Platnean allies defeated a force of 25,000 Persians under the Emperor Darius - has yet to become a suburb of the capital. The burial mound commemorating 192 Athenians who died in the battle survives, as does the nearby archaeological museum. So: how do I get there, and when is the museum open?

The Rough Guide advises taking a bus from Mayromateon in Athens, just north of the National Archaeological Museum, half-hourly until 2pm, hourly thereafter, with a journey time of an hour, the Blue Guide concurs, and furnishes the interesting en-route footnote about Drasesa Bridge where, in 1870, a group of British tourists was captured; four were later killed.

14.1% 14.1% 15.0%

Lonely Planet's Greece says the buses leave hourly, and cost 700 drachmas. The book claims Marathon's museum is open 8.30am-3pm daily: except Monday, the Rough Guide agrees, and addi-that the admission fee is 500-drachmas. The Bline Guide (the only one with a detailed map of the area) does not mention specific times, but states in its general introduction that all museums close out Mondays, and that 8.30am-3pm are the usual hours:

The Hellenic Tourism Organisation in Loodon appears to have been taking an extended Easter break early on this week, as repeated calls to 0171-734 5997 were not answered until late yesterday. The Athens tourist office (00 30 1 331 0562) obliged instead. The buses, said a travel adviser, have a sporadic schedule in the early morning; from 9am to 1pm they operate every 30 minutes, then hourly until 9pm. The museum ("small, but interesting", according to the lady at the tourist office) closes each afternoon at 2.30pm. So anyone tempted by the guidebooks to catch the 1.30pm bus and spend the last half-hour at the museum would find the bus doesn't run and the museum to be closed.

This marathon took me rather longer than the 128 or so minutes that the winner of tomorrow's race through London will manage: but at least at the end of it I didn't collapse and expire, as the hapless messenger bringing news of the victory over Persians is supposed to have done, after setting the pace for a 26-mile, 285-yard race.

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.48 hours in Athens

5/TRAVEL: GREECE

A weekend visit to the cradle of civilisation is

surprisingly feasible, thanks to the punch of the pound and good air links. Cathy Packe shows the way

Why go now?

ly to be better in Greece than almost streets.

The Amapolis is best seen at sunrise.

early or late in the season if you want to large tour groups.

keep costs down. You can fly from Lon-The Odeon of Herod Atticus, which cluding tax. Olympic quotes £200 for the



same dates, while Virgin has a fare of £177 on certain flights. When you arrive at the airport, you can take one of the many taxis scures the architecture, and afternoons into the city, but make sure you agree a price beforehand (it should be around £5) or take the bus from the terminal to Sindagma Square for a few pence.

Get your bearings

Europe, and, if you were to arrive by sea, your first view would be obscured by a dark, smoggy haze. Geographically, the two main landmarks are the bills of the eral of the finest exhibits hidden from view Acropolis and Lycabettos; between these is Sindagma (Constitution) Square, and from there, if you head north west in a not detailed, but often hint at a fascinating straight line, you will reach Omonia history: the Artemesion Poseidon, a huge Square, a less salubrious area with a higher than average concentration of sex shops cast in 460 BC. The description attached and burger joints. Athens is a vast, casually tells you that it was found in the sprawling-metropolis, but the centre is water in 1928 by some fishermen. compact, with most of the interesting areas concentrated between the two hills. .. An aperitif

Accommodation in Athens caters for aki, the smart area full of shops and everyone from backpackers to shipping restaurants (and poseurs), and the only magnates. If you are somewhere in between, try the Electra Palace (00 301 324 looks as if it might be a result of design 1401) on Nicodimou Street in Plaka, the rather than haphazard evolution. Sip oldest part of the city. It lacks the glitz your glass of ouzo or retsina at Peros or of the de luxe Grande Bretagne in da Capo, cafés that stand side by side Sindagma Square (00 301 323 0251), but on Filkis Etareas. Both have awnings it has a roof-top swimming-pool, and the which will protect you from the excess-Acropolis seems close enough to touch. es of the sun.

Why go now?

Take a hike
Tourists haven't yet started to invade. A stroll around the old town, Plaka, is Athens in force for the summer season, worthwhile, particularly if you get out and so you will have the city to yourself—rely—about early, before the tourists invade the atively speaking. And the weather is like—jewellery shops which line many of the

and if you start there and then walk down Dionission Arcopagiton, you can see var-Prices for scheduled flights start to rise. ious other ancient monuments which ofwith the temperature, so it is best to go ten seem to be ignored, at least by the

don (Heathrow or Gatwick) to Athens on can be seen from above as you climb up : British Airways (0345 222111), Olympic towards the Parthenon, has a beautiful-Airways (0171-409 3400) and Virgin At- ly-preserved façade; from there you can lantic (01293 747747). Over the first May, walk past the columns of the Stoa of bank holiday weekend, British Airways Eumenes into the theatre of Dionysos. has a World Offer of £163 return, in- The stepped seats of the amphitheatre look uncomfortable in comparison with the row of armchairs at the front, reserved for dignitaries.

Lunch on the run

Greece may have been able to boast cultural superiority for many centuries, but its culinary merits are nothing out of the ordinary. More or less wherever you go, you will find moussaka, grilled fish, or spinach pie on the menu, and none of it is likely to be hot. Better to choose a lunch spot from which you can watch the world go by: the Taverna Vizantino, opposite the kiosk on Geronda square, is the ideal spot.

Cultural afternoon

Call me a philistine, but to me the Acropolis has always been just a pile of old stones, usually full of scaffolding that obgenerally find it overcrowded. For something really spectacular, make for the Archaeological Museum, a short walk north of Omonia Square on 28 Oktovriou-Patission. Here the most stunning display is the gold from Mycenae: cases full of death Athens is one of the most polluted cities masks, breastplates, sheets, jewellery, pins and cups, all dating from the the sixth century BC.

The rooms are well set out, with sevuntil you get close to them, in order to create maximum impact. The labels are bronze statue of the god of the sea, was

People watching - people other than tourists, that is - is best done in Kolonpart of Athens where the architecture



Sole traders: sandals on sale in the Plaka, above. The Parthenon, left Photograph; RHPL

The district of Neapoli, just north of Kolonaki, is where Greeks themselves eat to avoid the raucous, tourist-ridden tavernas of Plaka. Two places to try are Kallisti, on Asklibiou, or Ipokratous, on the street of the same name. Both serve traditional Greek regional dishes, and will give you a taste of island cooking which you are not likely to find elsewhere in the capital.

Sunday morning: go to church

Athens seems to have a church on every street corner, and on Sunday mornings the sound of chanting seems to drift towards you from every direction. At Orthodox churches it is quite normal to pop in for a short while and then leave. The smaller churches naturally have the most intimate feel, but for the grandeur of a large-scale service. go to the main Orthodox cathedral, the New Metropolitan on Mitropoleos. which has regular services throughout Saturday evening and Sunday.

The finest music is usually to be heard at Avia Irini on Athinaidos, but at present it is being restored and no one seems to know when services will start again. the depths of the country.

Bracing brunch

Work up an appetite by taking a walk up Lycabettos hill, out of range of the noise of the city, to the church of St George. The view is spectacular in every direction. When you get to the top you will deserve breakfast at the Dionysos café: ham and eggs, coffee and toast, with perhaps a bowl of creamy yoghurt and honey thrown in for authenticity. For those who feel unable to cope with a serious walk before having a decent meal, there's a cable car which runs from 8,45am daily from a little station at the end of Ploutarhou.

A walk in the park

The National Garden is open from suprise to sunset every day. It was once the royal palace garden, which was opened to the public when the palace became the parliament building. It contains a selection of native plants as well as specimens brought in from outside. It is not strictly a garden in the English sense. rather a sort of tame park. Nevertheless, although it is right in the centre of one of the noisiest cities in the world, you can lose yourself inside and feel you are in

SURVIVAL GUIDE TO GREECE

There has probably never been a better time to visit Greece. Many air fares are at an all-time low and the pound is strong against the Greek drachma.

Getting there: for details of scheduled flights between the UK and the Greek capital, see the article on 48 Hours in Athens. Thessalouiki is served four times a week on Olympic and twice weekly on Cronus Air (0171-580 3500).

For travel from places outside London, and/or to reach destinations in the islands and elsewhere in Greece, the best prospect for a non-stop flight is a charter. For example, Unijet (0990) 114114) has flights to Corfu from several UK airports. On 11 May, a daytime flight from Manchester on 11 May costs £179; a night flight on the same date costs £139. From Gatwick, the corresponding flights are £169 and £125 respectively.

Getting around: buses and boats tend to be easy and cheap; domestic flights are expensive, and trains erratic. Greek Island Hopping 1998 by Frewin Poffley (Thomas Cook, £12.95) is a comprehensive survey of all Greek ferry services.

Accommodation in Corfu: the best villas are booked early in the season. July-August availability is already limited. But the picture for May-June and September (both lovely times of year to visit) is a bit brighter. Visiting the island in this way will prove expensive, especially for couples: most villas are family-

sized. Prices depend on the size and level of luxury, and whether extras such as car bire are included. But four people sharing should expect to pay £700-£800 each for a fortnight in peak season (flights and car included). The main companies offering flight and accommodation packages for properties in north-east Corfu often also with car or hoat hire are CV Travel (0870 6060013), Simply Ionian (0181-995 1121) Travel à la Carte (01635 201140), and Meon (01730 268411). Simply Ionian's flagship Villa Krouzeri near Kaminaki is still available in late June. And CV Travel's pièce de résistance - Lawrence Durrell's White House in Kalami - has weeks in May-June and September, Falcon Travel in Nissaki (00 30 663 91318) rents pleasant two-person apartments with balconies in Nissaki, £95 per apartment per week (£135 in peak season). Four-person apartments with balconies cost £160 per apartment per week (£240 in peak

More information: Hellenic Tourism Organisation, 4 Conduit Street, London W1R 0DJ (0171-734 5997). Tube: Oxford Circus. Open 9.30am-5pm, Mon-Thurs, 9.30am-4.30pm Fri. Good luck getting through on the phone.

A good source for books on Greece is Hellenic Book-service, 91 Fortess Road, London NW5 1AG (0171-267 9499; fax: 0171-267 9498).

Simon Calder and Linda Cookson

A train French Railways promises to take a burden from travellers' shoulders from tomorrow by easing the hassle of carrying luggage. More porters and baggage. space are promised while a new door-to-door luggage service offers collection and delivery of suitcases for just 215F (about £22) for three. The catch is that the offer applies only within France - Eurostar services from London are not included. Rail Europe: 0990 8488484.

Shristmas is midsummer in Antarctica, and you can spend the festive season there aboard World Discoverer. The vessel's 17night cruise starts in the Falklands and takes in South Georgia. Through Journey Latin Americosts £5,140 - not including as you request it up to 48 hours



flights from Britain to Port Stanley and back from Ushuaia.

Can't find a spare seat to Europe? Starting next Friday, KLM UK. (0990 074074) introduces a way to buy yourself onto a fullybooked flight. The Stanstedbased airline will offer "Flexi" nekets to Paris (one-way fare: £159), Düsseldorf (£189), Brussels (£199), Frankfurt (£229) and Milan (£249). For an extra £10, ca (0181-747-3108), the voyage you can guarantee a seat - so long

before departure. The ticket also confers access to the lounge. In gate". Call 0171-431 2964. addition the airline is offering Saver tickets, priced at £79 oneway to Frankfurt and Milan and £69 to the other destinations.

A room Butlin's (0990 011011) opens its

summer season this week with enhanced accommodation at Bognor Regis, Minehead and Skegness. A deluxe week in Skegness in August costs £352 for each adult, half-board.

Not the World Cup Ice-Cream Ride is the title of an indulgent bike ride through Camden, north London, on 13 June-the first Saturday of the soccer tournament. The tour takes in the borough's ice-cream outlets. A month from now ... such as Marine Ices in Chalk Farm, with a "full-time whistle

stop at the Flask pub in High-

"Rochefort Dix is as fruity and rich as Christmas pudding, fully justifying its reputation as 'a meal in a glass'. Despite the name, Rochefort Dix is actually 11.3 per cent alcohol by volume - Harry Pearson samples Belgium's Trappist beers in the May edition of Conde Nast Traveller, price £2.70.

A week from now ...

the May Day bank holiday is celebrated at St Fagan's Museum of Welsh Life (01222 573500) near Cardiff, with a May fair and a re-enactment of the 1648 battle of St Fagan's.

... you can make tracks half-way across Dartmoor national park when Okehampton in Devon rejoins the national rail network. Dr Beeching hounded the railways out of Dartmoor in the Sixties, but Wales & West begins Sunday services from Exeter along this portion of the old Plymouth-to-London line from 24 May. Further details from Okehampton tourist information (01837 53020) or from the new national rail timetable.

A year from now ...

... Sandy Gall, the former ITN journalist, will be one of the guest lecturers aboard MV Minen a on her Easter voyage around the Holy Land. The two-week cruise begins in Aquba, Jordan, and ends in Rhodes. and offers the opportunity to visit Petra, Luxor, Alexandria and Jerusalem, Prices start at £3.015. The vessel is operated by Swan Hellenic (0171-800 2200).

GREEN CHANNEL RED CHANNEL

Our Chief Photographer, Brian Harris, approached the the travel desk this week with a frown and a piece of paper - the latest fares from Le Shintle for its carvarrying operation through the Channel Tunnel For Fridays and Saturdays cyclists - but a new book suggests that in peak season - during the World Cup and school summer holidays - a Club

Class return for a car will cost £270. This son of price has been unheard of for years on the short Channel crossings.
Yet one figure, at the foot of the table is remarkably small and stable: £15. single of return, for a bicycle and its rider.

Bicycles are not allowed on Le Shuttle, unless they are enclosed in another vehicle. To its considerable credit. Le Shortle solves this problem by Folkestone to Calais, for a fraction of the cost of an Eurostar train ticket from 24 hours in advance on 0990 353535. You might decide to use the service

to pedal off towards Holland for the celebrations of Queen Beatrice's birthday next Thursday. The event will be marked, as usual, by street parties and parades. The Dutch, of course, are keen some are rather too keen.

In his Amsterdam City Guide (published today by Lonely Planet, £8.99). Rob van Driesum describes a clash in Holland's largest city:

"Scene: Vijzelstraat during afternoon peak hour.

"Plor. Loud swearing in the most gutteral Dutch. The author of this book turns around to see what's happening. A gentleman on a bicycle has stopped for a red light; other cyclists swerve to laying on a special minibus for riders. avoid colliding into the back of him. Idand their lakes at least twice a day from iot! Scrotum! Can't you just keep going? You're a road hazard!

"The gentleman in question? The Ashford to Cafais. You need to reserve mayor of Amsterdam, Schelto Patijn."

Warnings about Greece

Advice from the Foreign Office on

Corfu: "Great care should be taken by yacht and other boat owners sailing in the Corfu Channel. There have been numerous reports of robberies. In May 1907 a sailing boat crewed by two British citizens was boarded close to the Albanian coast, and boats should stay overnight in harbours where they can be guarded."

Why you should keep your clothes on in Greece, according to the Rough

"Nude bathing is legal on only a very few beaches (on Mykonos, for example), and is deeply offensive to the more traditional Greeks - exercise considerable sensitivity to local feeling and the kind of place you're in. It is, for example, very bad ctiquette to swim or sunbathe nude within sight of a church. Generally, if a

heach has become fairly established for nudity or is well sechuded, it is unlikely that police will come charging in. Where they do get bothered is if they feel a place is turning into a "hippie beach" or nudity is getting too overt on mainstream tourist stretches. Most of the time, the only action will be a warning, but you can officially be arrested straight off - facing up to three days in jail and a stiff fine."









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The Brum deal

Regenerated, restored Birmingham is an inspiring, exciting city: you name it, they have it - art, sculpture, hands-on galleries. Three 10-year-olds were impressed, as Catherine Stebbings found out

A cynic might say that obliging a family to spend a day in Birmingham constitutes a cruel and unusual punishment. Yet this is a city that really does have plenty to appeal. The revamping of the centre over the past two decades has redeemed it as an exciting and inspiring place to be. There is a glorious architectural mix of old and new; highly ornate late Victorian and classical buildings stand alongside architecture of the Nincties. Behind them the intriguing Jewellery Quarter is still a hive of activity. Meanwhile, colourful houseboats line the canals that cross the

Birmingham was once known as the "city of a thousand trades", and many of them are still practised here today. The city is still growing, still deeply rooted in international business and trade and still home to a highly cosmopolitan community, reflected in the diversity of shops, markets, cafes and restaurants.

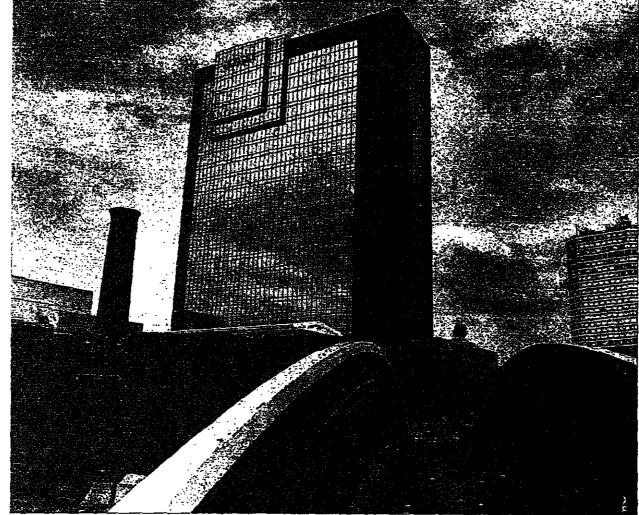
There are many reminders of its historic past, not least the number of museums, galleries and stately homes (some of which offer free entry to visitors). The centre is an excellent place to start, with museums, good shopping and canal-side walks all within a few hundred yards of one another.

Birmingham's museum and art gallery opened in 1885, in order to educate local artisans and inspire them to compete with the Continent. Perhaps best known for its impressive collection of Pre-Raphaelite art, the museum also has some exciting modern works, including silverware, textiles and ceramics as well as some intriguing ancient art and Egyptian collections. In contrast there are good natural history galleries for birds, beasts and bones, and a popular "light on science" gallery.

Meanwhile, the centre of the city, much of it pedestrianised. offers a series of delightful squares, fountains and imaginative sculpture, such as the huge Iron Man by Anthony Gormley, a precursor of his Augel of the North, in Victoria Square. The area bustles with shoppers, street musicians and other life. Perhaps most impressive is Centenary Square, one of the biggest squares in Europe, which sprawls out of the innovative, modern and frantic International Conference Centre (ICC). Behind the ICC, join the canal-side walk or check out the latest contemporary art exhibition at the Ikon gallery in Brindleyplace.

If it's wet, then take a break in the public library where regular story reading and craft sessions take place in the Centre for the Child. Alternatively, admire the Burne-Jones stained-glass windows in St Philip's Cathedral on Colmore Row.

For those with more stamina, a short bus ride can take you to many other free attractions. Admire the long gallery at the Jacobean Aston Hall, visit a veoman's farmhouse at Blakeslev Hall, discover the 14th-century ruins of Weoley Castle or tackle the university's stunning collection of paintings at the Barber Institute of Fine Art.



Take Off

The Birmingham city breakers were Mariella Menato, Sarah Bouing and Nicole Cunningham, all 10 years old.

They arrived by train and walked to the museum and art gallery. After lunch they went for a stroll along the canal. Having been to the science galleries back at the museum, they played on the computers in the public library, dropped into the cathedral and did a spot of window-shopping.

Mariella: It was nice going by train straight into the centre. Birmingham is a lively place and the centre is pedestrianised, so there were lots of people wandering around and quite a few street buskers. There is a really gorgeous fountain in Victoria Square where the water falls down the steps with a huge lady at the top. In fact there is a lot of interesting sculpture and architecture around, I liked the ICC which is made of loads of blue pipes and glass. It is really modern.

was a good computer giving lots of information on the artists, their lives and the pictures. It really helped me to look at the pictures. I think they should have more around the museum. I liked all the detailed and extravagant pieces in the silver

gallery. I did a few sketches in the Egyptian gallery, where there

were mummies, tomb sculptures and some really nice hieroglyphs.

Sarah: I really enjoyed Birmingham. The museum and art gallery was good. We have been doing Greek pots at school, so it was interesting to see the real things. The science bit on the top floor was really great. There was a good variety of things to do and they were all clearly explained and fun - pan pipes, gravity experiments, mirrors, and arches to build. I liked the cold air fan which we used to control the movement of a ball over the top. There was also a camera that we played with, taking photos of

The art gallery was nice. In the Pre-Raphaelite gallery there Nicole: There is so much to do in Birmingham, that you could



Face-lift: the revamping of Birmingham over the past two decades has resulted in a city that is Photographs: Tom Pilston genuinely fun to visit

never get bored. It's an arty city, there was sculpture everywhere. I liked the Impressionist paintings in the art gallery best. I thought the Pre-Raphaelite paintings were so detailed that some looked like photographs, but I didn't like their choice of colours; they were too bright to look natural. However, the colours worked really nicely in the stained-glass windows by Burne-Jones that we saw later in the cathedral.

I couldn't look at pictures all day. The walk along the canal made a nice break, and the science bit in the afternoon was really good.

Birmingham orientation

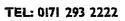
Transport and parking: Birmingham's mainline stations, New Street: and Snow Hill, are 10 minutes' walk from the centre. There are numerous car parks in the centre, but traffic is busy.

Tourist information: 2 City Arcade (0121 643 2514); ICC. Broad. Street, Birmingham (0121 665 6116). Free attractions: Museum and Art Gallery, Chamberlain Square

(0121 235 2834), open Mon-Sat 11am-5pm, Sun 12.30pm-5pm. Ikon Gallery, Oosell Square, Brindleyplace (01 21 248 0708), open Tues-Sat, 11am-7pm, Sun 11am-5pm. Birmingham Canal Navigation's extensive network is open to pedestrians, good around the recently developed Gas Street basin area. Central library. Chamberlain Square (0121 303 4511), offers story-telling and craft sessions throughout the holidays.

Shops: The centre is crammed with modern malls, Victorian arcades and indoor markets. And, of course, jewellery of all sorts is found in the Jewellery Quarter. Good markets for jewellery, antiques, textiles, retro wear and lots more around Per-

Food and drink: A good selection of fun places to eat in the city centre is found in Brindleyplace, next door to the International Convention Centre alongside the canal. The Edwardian tea room in the museum and art gallery is a pleasant stop; other cafés and



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Blade runners

How do you learn not to fall out of a craft 30 times as long as it is wide - let alone propel it along? Eric Kendall has a go

The sight of an eight gliding down the river conjures up images of grace, power, speed, co-ordination. But not worbliness, In fact, the craft look so unwobbly that it would nevor cross your mind to question the physics of rowing, despite the blindingly obvious shortcomings of a bout that's around 30 times longer than

Try to get abourd a single tibe one-person version), and the situation becomes immediately apparent. hough be fine, they say, Just remember never to let go of the oars. and keep the blades on the water's surface - they act as stabilisers, inwhich case, how the hell do you use the oars to make you go. I wondered.

Is it anything like rowing a dinghy, I asked. No. That's about as relevant as flying paper aeroplanes is to jumbo pilots on their - from the water to take a stroke. first outing. What it is more like, allegedly, is the erg, a sort of grown-up version of the rowing machine you get at Christmas and tre of gravity by critical inches. All slove in a corner of the garage for that technique stuff can come latseveral years as part of your freally must do a boot sale some time". collection. Admirably stable though the erg is a bolted to the floor, in some cases - it lacks essential equipment such as ours, which no quick fix, If I could just have got may accreyou upright on water but are aboresponsible for a lot of the problems, Instead, you pull on a bar bank, everything would have fallen which has ample room for both your hands at once and doesn't involve the overlapping hand position. (with one our above the other) ing to swim for it is about the best which real ours require. This is a you can hope for. You can feel serious omission

but that you'd know it while on has all kinds of strange rules about straight backs and extending your arras before bending your legs - lots For more on rowing see p11

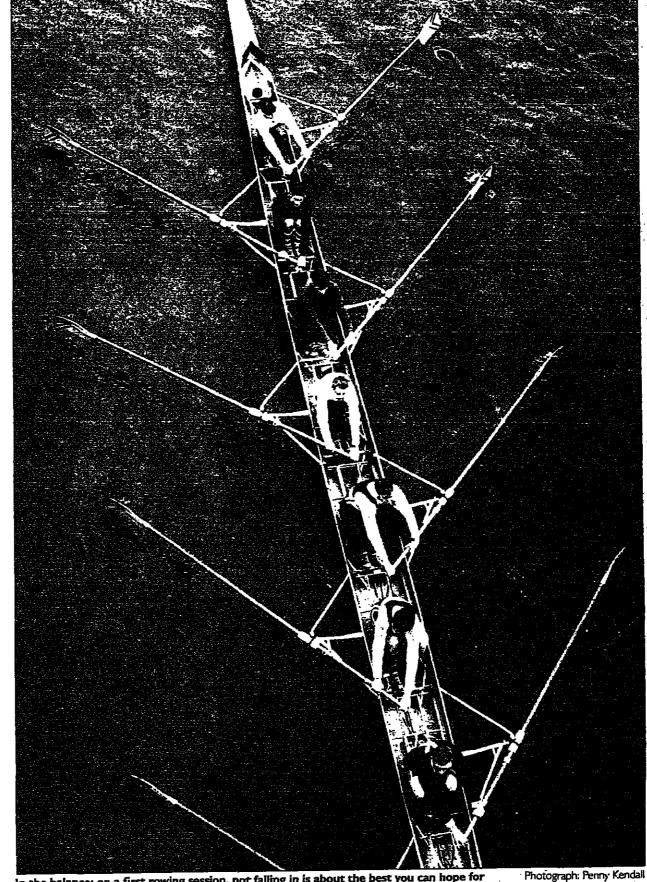
of counter-intuitive stuff which just possibly has little to do with rowing technique but is a ruse to improve your response to instructions shouted from the river bank. If so, it certainly works: after a few minutes abourd a real boat I was told to stand up, which I did without even stopping to check the temperature of the

Any questions you may have should be asked before climbing aboard. Concentration, in the form of pursed lips, furrowed brow and a kind of rigor mortis of all relevant body parts, precludes any chance of conversation from the moment you set off. As you grip the oars like a drowning mart clutching at driftwood, tentative first movements are severely hampered by desperate wobbles every time you try to raise a blade

As for using your legs, erg-style. forget it. Your knees get right in the way, and probably raise your cener, once you are moving through the water, becoming more stable with speed, just as on a bicycle.

But that's easier said than done - a chicken and egg situation with moving a bit more, perhaps even been catapulted from the river into place. Either that or I'd have fallen - into the water.

And on a first outing, not havpretty pleased with yourself with one complete, successful stroke in the eighter the first time, because every hundred - anything much even this apparently simple machine more than that, and you've got real potential.



In the balance: on a first rowing session, not falling in is about the best you can hope for

LEARNING TO ROW

Despite an impression that you learn to row at school, university or not at all rowing is highly accessible. Of the 550 rowing clubs in England, 200 are "open" - meaning, roughly speaking, that you can turn up and join. They hold sessions for novices, who can expect to start racing within their first season; a lot of night practice must go on, as you never seem to notice beginners floundering around on the river (another reason why most people don't appreciate just how hard it is to row).

Competition is an integral part of the scene, but for some the river environment, particularly in large cities, provides half the fun - misty mornings, bird life and fresh air. The scope of rowing's development as a non-competitive leisure/fitness activity has yet to be fully developed, perhaps because everyone who gets involved tends to become competitive, regardless of their original

Rowing ergometers (ergs) - also found at health clubs and school gyms - play a significant part in learning to row, and for training. Before a certain stage is reached. excursions on water will deliver little in the way of exercise; simply putting the strokes together is technically so hard to do that you need an erg to fill the gap, by giving you a proper workout. The levels of physical exertion are high when you do it right - it's one of the ultimate forms of fitness, more about stamina than strength, with the advantage of being low impact, other thanwhen boats collide.

- The various boats are singles, doubles, quads and octuples which are sculled (two oars per person), and pairs, fours and eights which are rowed (one blade each). It's normal to go out in a coxed quad first, then a single; skills are best developed in small boats. Though taking charge of just one oar in a four or eight has obvious appeal to a novice, the thought of being in a boat with a bunch of clowns who may be even more incompetent than you is worth consideration.

The Amateur Rowing Association (participation enquiries 0181-741 5314) is the sport's governing body, and can provide details of nearby clubs open to would be

Thames Rowing Club, Putney (0181-788 0798) welcomes new members. Contact Sally Malt for information. This is the leading. women's club, with women making up about three-quarters of the 200 or so active members. Many are world-class athletes; it's a sports club, not a social club, but the atmosphere is welcoming and new members will benefit from good coaching and training opportunities, even if competition is not their primary aim.

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Sweet scents are not the sole-preserve of flowers. Kirsty Fergusson writes in praise of aromatic foliage

For the past two weeks, the westerly wind has carried balsam poplar to receive their scent, but it is enhanced are, the fugitive quality of the fragrance adds cona sweetly aromatic scent into the house. Friends peer by a fall of rain. I've noticed this also with the newly interrogatively at the fading daffodils and viburatims emerged leaves of the very comely bay willow, Salix and cast suspicious glances at the euphorbias, bluebells and pulmonarias, sniffing for an answer. The trouble is that they are looking for flowers, whereas the source in its native Scandinavia it is used in the same way of this lovely scent is a leaf: the sticky, uncurling, himegreen leaves of the balsam poplar, *Populus balsamifera*.

There is a subtle subversiveness about a garden

that is principally scented by leaf and resinous wood rather than by flowers, which is rather enjoyable. We tend to choose garden trees to provide structure, focus, screening or shelter - with the added and occaissional bonus of flowers and fruit - but rarely for scents.

Alan Bennett thought first to look for a flower when he was on the trail of the poplar's balsamic odour, and was led up a number of blind alleys by his olfactory imagination. "Once I thought it was daffodils," he recalls in his Diaries, "in Rome I thought it was a waiter's aftershave (we were dining outside); once I even thought it was sweat and that the person concerned ... must be like a saint and have the odour of sanctity." It was Alec Guinness who, during a stroll around his garden, eventually undid the mystery for him, and Bennett took a branch from his tree into Penhaligon's, hoping he could buy a similar scent. He couldn't, "but a dreamy look came into the assistant's eye as she sniffed, and she called in her colleagues who were similarly entranced.

However entranced by this singular perfume, you should proceed cautiously before planting one in the garden; balsam poplars are pretty big trees, and they sucker prodigiously. Populus x candicans is a samic experience all that much longer, you can find significantly smaller plant, with a strong and simi- a slightly fresher, fruitier version in the scent of lar scent, that is much less inclined to sucker.

pentandra, which, if you shut your eyes, could easily be mistaken for a crushed leaf of bay laurel. In fact, as bay leaves in the more southerly parts of Europe.

But it is only in their earliest infancy that the leaves of the poplar and willow smell nice. The fascinating scents do not endure beyond early spring. and after the end of April you have to sniff elsewhere for foliage that smells as good as it looks. If a taste for balsam cannot be denied once spring

There is a subtle subversiveness about a garden that is principally scented by leaves

has moved on, then the Bennetts amongst us should hasten to procure an incense rose, Rosa primula. This is a fragile and not particularly large rose, with arching stems that respond well to being spreadeagled on a partially shaded wall. The pale yellow flowers are pretty enough, but the shiny, dark leaves are the main attraction. After rain, the fragrance is arresting, and puzzled first-timers sniff the little flowers over and over again, before it becomes apparent that it's the leaves which need fussing over.

I'm not sure I would want to prolong the balwalnut leaves - and I can never resist stroking a You don't have to crush or rub the leaves of the cluster of leaves in passing - but, lovely though they

For Sales

siderably to their attractiveness. Those sweetly aromatic scents can become oppressively sticky and cloving after a while, and leave you more in the mood for the cleaner, sharper smells of pine or eucalyptus resin, which last the year round.

There are citruses, pines and eucalyptuses for every size of garden, but if space were not a pressing issue, I'd find it hard to resist the highly smellable incense cedar. Calocedrus decurrens (you may also know it as Libocedrus decurrens). A muskily sweet scent that descends on you from 70ft of bark and densely packed sprays of leaves possesses an altogether more powerful sensation than that, say, of breathing in the scent of a mignonette.

There are many good reasons to plant the tall and handsome Katsura tree, Cercidiphyllum japonicum, in larger gardens, too - the foliage in spring is red, which quickly turns deep green, becoming ye low, orange and pinky-red as autumn advances. And in autumn it possesses a scent like none other - a warm, sweet smell, redolent of cooked (some would say burning) sugar that suits the mood and light of the season as well as the balsamic scents of the poplar suit the mood of spring.

The Japanese have long practised the art of positioning aromatic trees so that the prevailing winds carry the scents around, rather than away from the garden - which is easier said than done. M my of us are the beneficiaries of scented trees belonging to gardens upwind of our own. And now, before the leaves get any bigger, anyone who has yet to experience what it is like to be downwind of a balsam poplar in late April may like to remedy the situation immediately.

Citrus Calamondin: leaves can be as strongly scented as blossom and fruit Photograph: Howard Rice/ Garden Picture Library

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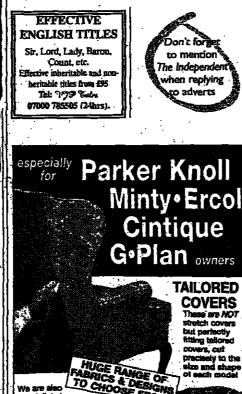


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Grow with the flow

Floods needn't be a disaster - with a little help, your plants should be strong enough to recover, says Ursula Buchan

ever, it became rapidly less pleasant on Maundy Thursday, when continuous heavy rain caused the river and its tributaries to rise, and there was widespread flooding.

spectacle of our furniture floating freely in fifthy water; but the back garden was less fortunate. For several days, flower beds and lawn were under 7in of water, which had cascaded off the neighbouring fields. On a clay soil such as ours, the water was slow to drain from the surface, even after the rain eased. Although only a combeen flooded like ours, most of those on heavy soils must still be sodden, even waterlogged, and may well have been roundly cursed by their owners as a result.

Gardeners agree about little, as a rule, but they are at one in their belief that prolonged waterlogging harms most plants, except of course "aquatic" and "bog plants". Water saturation prevents the fragile root hairs from extracting oxygen from the soil which surrounds them. Oxygen is needed to produce energy. growth, even survival. Roots die without oxyphytopthera.

Flooding, or even just a bout of heavy rain, causes the surface of a clay soil to "cap", when it dries out; this hinders rain from entering and is more, heavy ram washes nutrients out of the topsoil. This is especially true of nitrogen. which is needed at the start of the growing season by green-leafed plants, such as lawn

The not-so-sweet irony is that recent droughts have encouraged us gardeners to grow a range of Mediterranean plants, such as cistus and artemisia, which have evolved in well drained, stony soils and under hot summer suns. It stands to reason that they will not appreciate being stuck in a saturated soil, battered by cold north winds.

Before you are reduced to tears by this dreary catalogue of undesirable consequences, bear in mind that plants are often remarkably resilient, and most should recover their strength as the weather improves and soil temperatures rise. This is certainly the opinion of Guy Barter. senior horticultural adviser at the Royal Hor- Anna Pavord is on holiday

The Nene valley in Northamptonshire is a very ticultural Society's garden at Wisley. He bepleasant spot. I know, because I live there. How- lieves that the sensitivity of plants, even "drought lovers", to short-lived waterlogging (which is what this is) is often exaggerated Spring is, after all, the season when the days are lengthening, plants are in active growin and We were lucky, we escaped the depressing the soil will warm up quickly - once it stops raining, of course.

His advice to anyone whose garden was flooded is to hose silt and dirt off plants gently, so that the leaves can breathe; prick with a garden fork the topsoil of borders, once they have dried on top, to allow air and water to the roots once more; and reson vegetables, paratively small number of gardens will have if seedlings have been washed away or seed. has rotted, when conditions improve. Cloches. and horticultural fleece can be used both to protect existing plantings while the nights are still cold, and to warm up the soil before

As far as the lawn is concerned. Derek Walder, director of the Institute of Grounds. manship, suggests that once any accumulated silt and rubbish has dried, it should be raked or swept off, and then the lawn spiked extensively with a hired spiker (or a garden fork so the whole plant depends on it for healthy if the area is small), to a depth of 6m-9m, so that air, light and rain can reach the roots. gen, and anaerobic conditions also favour. In two or three weeks, water on a liquid fernasty, soil-borne fungal diseases, such as tiliser such as Phostrogen, which the grasses will absorb quickly.

I hope my plants will survive their ducking. However, should any turn yellow and die. I shalf, after a short period of mourning, pull myself so, paradoxically, can lead to drought. What together and treat it as a golden opportunity to grow something different.

After digging in some grit to open up the soil a little. I shall plant some of the choice. tall-growing perennial lobelias, together with a few of the many colourful cultivars of Iris sibirica, and perhaps the imposing. Ift-tall Eupatorium purdureum 'Atropurpureum', a flower much loved by bees and peaceck butterflies. Meadowsweet (filipendula), trollius, and astilbes will also feature. These are all attractive perennials which are often impossible to place successfully, except in a bog garden, because they require that tricky combination of full exposure to summine and constant soil moisture in summer.

This year, for a change, they may just have the conditions that they like. Who said a heavy soil is a curse?

WEEKEND WORK

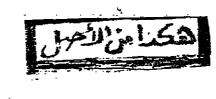
Pruning: there is still time to prune buddleias. Aim for a neat, rounded profile, cutting stems back by about 80 per cent - to just above the pairs of new leaves or buds. Weeds: if ground elder is a major problem, choose a dry and windless day and spray carefully with Roundup. Small infestations can be dug out by hand, taking care to remove as much root as possible.

Vegetables: sugar snaps and mange-tout peas should be sown for late August eating. Perennials: overgrown perennials can be split up and replanted - push two forks back to back into the crown, and force the

Kirsty Fergusson

GARDENING





Dane :

The future is assured for Eton's jolly boatmen

In a world of change, the famous Berkshire school has safeguarded a key tradition, writes Duff Hart-Davis

body needs shade from the trees. Nevertheless, hard by the river Thames a couple of miles west of Windsor there is less Etonian oarsmen to come.

digging a lake at Dorney for more than 30 years. A possible site was identified in the Sixties, yet the scheme seemed so colossal and daunting that it was shelved; not until the arrival of the present bursar, Roderick Watson, in 1985, did it start moving towards reality.

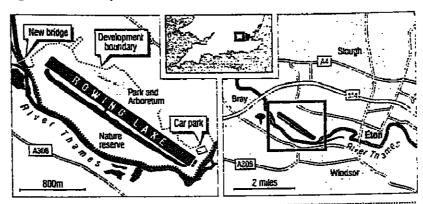
Because he came from a mining background, and had worked for Rio Tinto, Mr Watson "wasn't scared of really big projects", and it is largely his tenacity that has driven this one through. His brief, in short, has been to create a lake on which in safety, since their traditional waterway, the Thames, has become intolerably crowded. In summer 6,000 pleasure vessels take to it every month; accidents are common,

Jolly boating weather it has not been: the and a prize exhibit in the information centre breeze has been more arctic than hay har- set up to illustrate the lake project is the vest, and with the sun barely visible, no- bow section of the school's third eight, which was chopped off by a cruiser reversing out of the Datchet marina.

Eton has owned the site - a 450-acre now taking shape a development that will stretch of level farmland at Dorney - since benefit rowers from all parts of southern the Twennes, and from the start the school England and gladden the hearts of count-realised that the only way to finance the scheme would be through the sale of sand The Eton authorities have talked about and gravel. But the project ran into fierce opposition from local people, supported by both district and county councils.

The main objections were that invaluable archeological remains would be destroyed, and that the disturbance created by forries hauling gravel would be insufferable. Yet Eton disarmed antagonism, and evolved a plan that has already brought benefits to the local community.

Under EC legislation the school was obliged to prepare an environmental statement of its intentions. To minimise the nuisance caused by extraction, Eton agreed boys from the school will be able to row to build a new road from the uninhabited western end of the site, and also came up with a radical proposal - that half the gravel should go out by conveyor belt through a tunnel specially dug under the Thames,



Jolly boating weather/And a hay harvest breeze Blade on the feather/Shade off the trees (Eton Boating Sang)

ed on the south side of the river.

Later, one of the contractors produced a similar scheme: that gravel should be shifted by conveyor belt slung under a permanent new footbridge over the river. The idea made a big impact on the planners, as did the school's plans for enhancing the new lake

to a processing plant which already exist- by planting an arboretum of native trees and creating a separate nature reserve, in which small fields will be broken up by hedges, and farming will be designed to attract wildlife.

When the project went to appeal, and Eton won, locals began to take a positive view. Now many are in favour of what they call "the Dorney lake". Already they have

a new car park close to the shore, a footpath right round the site, and a new bridleway coming past. Thousands of trees have been planted, and there can be no doubt that, when everything is complete, the environment will be substantially enhanced.

For the past two summers, the Oxford Archaeological Unit has held camps on the site, and their painstaking removal of topsoil has east much light on the early history of the Thames valley. Their most spectacular find to date is the oldest bridge ever discovered in Britain - a wooden structure dating from about 1,400BC. By the time the project is completed, the college will have provided more than £1m for archaeological exploration alone.

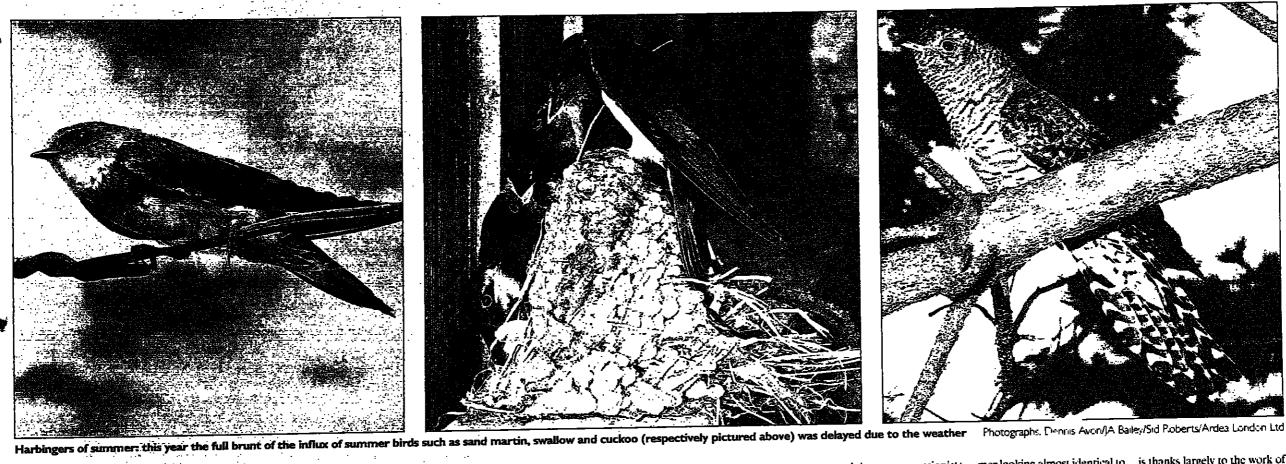
Because the water table is so high, any hole fills the moment it is dug. Bulldozers therefore have to excavate blind, using sonar to achieve the depth of four metres which an international rowing course requires.

Work is now well advanced, but even with excavation in full swing, the site is extraordinarily peaceful. Canada geese have moved in to the open water, and all you can see from the temporary viewingpoint is a couple of orange diggers probing away in the middle distance. At the

western end, lorries move sedately off from the processing plant at the rate of about eight an hour, and the conveyor purrs steadily away beneath the footbridge. It is hard to believe that sand and gravel are going out at the rate of 600,000 tons a year. and that in all 4.5 million cubic metres of material will have to be shifted.

The finished course will be 2,000 metres long and eight lanes wide, with another two return lanes alongside, partitioned off by a slender island. Every effort will be made to give the lake a rural appearance; its banks will be scalloped and planted with reeds so that they look like part of the river.

The first 1,000 metres will be ready by 1 April 2000. To begin with, only Eton boys and national oarsmen will use the new facility, but the plan is that within another year 1,200 metres will be open to all comers. In spite of the huge quantities of gravel it is yielding, the scheme will never finance itself. "We've gone in with our eyes open," says Mr Watson, "recognising that the privilege of having this course will cost Eton £4m. But the school has a long rowing tradition, and the Fellows [the governing body] see the lake as an investment in rowing as a whole, for future generations."







Alien invasion

Stand by for the annual influx of feathered summer visitors, writes Daniel Butler. While the birds are busy courting, this is the perfect time to observe their behaviour

For the next fortnight, Britain will be inundated by the unansonal north winds of the last fortnight, the full brunt of the invasion has been delayed somewhat, but over the coming days a vast horde of migrant birds will touch down to spend the northern summer feeding

As the legions of warblers, doves, flycatchers, swallows and martins begin nesting, displaying and hunting, this is an ideal opportunity for the amateur to brush up on bird-watching skills. Of course, many species had already arrived before Easter's can only temporarily halt one of sudden cold snap: turtledoves, for nature's annual tides, however, example, seem to have been particularly early, and Cambridgeshire notched up a county record with a nightingale being heard on 6 April. More usual were the sand martins, chiffchaffs and wheatears who land-

lowed by the first willow warblers. But then came the freezing

north and west winds. Although lower temperatures perse are of little serious concern to most migrants, the headwinds slowed the progress of the invasion force's main squadrons. And for those migrants which had arrived, the cold weather suddenly reduced insect numbers, slowing their recovery from their arduous journey from sub-Saharan Africa. As a result, for most species the conspicuous nest-building, singing and flight displays have yet to begin in earnest.

and over the coming days familiar friends are certain to arrive in force. Most visually obvious are probably the swallows, house martins and swifts, but careful listening will soon reveal the presence of garden warblers and spotted flycatchers not to forget the glaringly ob-

vious cuckoos, of course. The newcomers, together with all permanent residents, will be intent on reproduction. beginning with courtship and nestbuilding. As they do so, they are at their most preoccupied and least conscious of human beings, giving the perfect opportunity for observation.

The frenzied activity is apparent in even the most builtup of areas, but sitting quietly in any park, wood or piece of open country will reap rewards. The more ambitious may want to take advantage of the season

ed, as usual, in March, closely fol- to spot our 20 breeding raptors, most of which are normally difficult to find.

If you've the chance to make it up to one of our mg keep your eyes peeled for red and black grouse. These birds are normally screened by waist-high heather and scrub, but during the breeding season the males of both species come out into the open. Red grouse stand on vantage points to proclaim their territories and to lure in females. while blackcocks assemble at dawn at traditional sites - known as leks - where they dance to impress potential mates.

Red grouse stand on vantage points to proclaim their territories and to lure in females

Their lowland relative, the grev partridge, is more widely distributed, and is also easily pinned down at this time of year - before arable crops grow tall enough to hide the birds. They are most obvious at dusk and dawn, when the males give little "kiiii-er-ik" calls as they try to keep their mates from wandering. In wetter areas, the drab brown snipe makes itself apparent as the males show off to their mates by descending suddenly from a height, "drumming" as they fall. This noise is created by air vibrating their stiff outer tail feathers (in fact it sounds more like short bursts on a kazoo than

their flashing metallic blue upper parts and deep orange bellies, they are impossible to mistake, it is usually difficult to pin them down, and most people have never seen this widely-

distributed little hunter. For those from more urban surroundings, there is still plenty to look out for in any garden. park or piece of waste ground. Several species are already busy building nests; bluetits and house sparrows are particularly obvious as they squabble over the best sites. For the slightly more ambitious, this is also the perfect time to work out the difference between the apparently identical marsh and willow tits (the former has little sneeze-like calls, while the willow's are more of a droning buzz).

One of the real thrills of opening your eyes to mating displays over the next couple of months is the chance to spot something unusual. As global warming gets under way, there are new sightings every year. and the British Trust for Ornithology concedes that many rare species may be present in far larger numbers than are officially recognised. The honey buzzard and hobby, for example, are both migrant insect-eaters who are thought to be increasing in numbers - possibly thanks to global warming. Both birds can be difficult to identify, however, with the for-

any miniature percussionist). mer looking almost identical to is thanks largely to the work of Look for kingfishers, too, along our resident common buzzard, helpful amateurs. One word of almost any river bank, as they pair while the latter's wing-shape is caution, however; all British up, calling to each other with also easily confused with those birds are protected, and interistles. Although, with of its cousins, the peregrine, ference during the breeding seamerlin and kestrel. The honey buzzard can be distinguished by its longer neck and smaller head, while the hobby gives itself away by flying high above gravel pits on sunny days to

catch insects lofted by thermals. gradual increase in both species er. £16.99).

There are no hard-and-fast rules, but do keep a sensible distance.

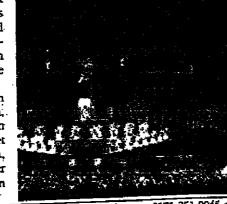
Daniel Butler and his partner Bel Crewe are the authors of the recently published 'Urban Dream. Successful tracking of the Rural Realities' (Simon & Schus-

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On 1 May, strange beasts roam the streets of Padstow, on the river Camel in north Cornwall. And young maidens may wish to avoid a close encounter with the fearsome, masked Obby Oss who, with his accompanying Teazer and retinue of singers and dancers, tries to envelop young girls in his saileloth skirts. Later on he meets his rival, a more genteel Obby Oss. Some say he represents a dragon being lured into the sea by St Petroc, who settled in Padstow in the 6th century; others that the Obby Oss has pagan origins; 1 May is the festival of Beltane, the first day of summer in the old pagan calendar.

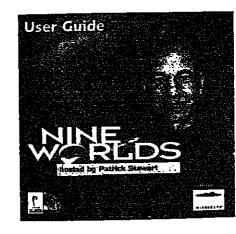
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The soft appeal of Brenda's curves

Sofas that have their origins in sculpture and analysis? Unlikely but true, finds Roger Mills as he meets a designer with a flair for taking things personally

Brenda is swathed entirely in purple velvet. Your eye travels slowly over the undulating landscape of her curves. You'd like to run your hand along her. Once you've seen her, her shape stays in the mind. Rampant sexism? Not a bit of it. Brenda is a sofa.

Brenda is the creation of Richard Joseph Ward, a London furniture designer who, over the last few years, has made unusual sofas his special subject. Naming pieces after the client who commissions them is a Ward trademark - reinforcement, perhaps, of the undeniable personality that they seem to exude. Brenda the sofa was christened after a London collector. Brenda Rosen.

"I'd just come back from living in Paris." Brenda remembers, "and I decided to get rid of all my furniture and start again. I wanted to get away from the boring threepiece settees I'd always had. But when I went round the big stores, everything I saw was so conventional.

"A friend suggested Richard to me, but the first dozen designs he showed me were very classical. Everything I saw I could have got in Harrods, I noticed he had a sheet of rough sketches in the bottom of his portfolio that he kept trying to hide. Just something wild: you won't be interested, he said when I asked to see them, but I insisted. We looked at this scribbled wildness, and I saw the idea for my sofa."

Brenda's encouragement was a turnsofa onwards his designs became increasingly individual. Ward's calling card is the dramatic, swooping line. He likens doing a sofa design to designing a boat. and looking at the elegant, racy silhouettes of his pieces you see what he means. Paul Klee used to describe drawing as



ing-point for Ward, and from Brenda the "taking a line for a walk". Ward seems to take his in-line skating.

> But pure aesthetics are only part of the story. An intriguing feature of the Ward CV is that his original training was not in furniture design but in sculpture. This, however, to sit on, it would be a non-starter." never seemed quite right. "I always felt that

realise that I wanted to make things that have a function, not just something you look at and don't use. You could build a sofa that looked like a Chieftain tank, but if it didn't fulfil the primary function of being good

traditional upholstery methods for the simple reason that they are comfortable. and he uses hardwood frames because they hold upholstery tacks best.

Style and functionality are the obvious Practicality is the reason behind one fea- demands on the furniture designer. But dethere was something missing. I began to ture of Ward's sofas that is firmly in line signing to commission takes Ward into

with tradition: his upholstery. Ward uses areas well beyond the drawing-board. "Clients often have much clearer ideas than mastered the art of putting burns on about the fabric they want than what they sofas. want their sofa to look like," he points out. "A major part of my job is trying to tease Richard Joseph Ward will design one off out of people what kind of design will repieces or produce sofas to existing designs for ally suit their taste."

Brenda on Brenda: Richard Joseph Ward stands by his creation and his client Photograph: Philip Meech

the mind-reading burdle. When working on a commission his first step is to visit the client at home. As well as taking in what they are saying they want, and the specific location that the piece is designed for, his antennae are sensitive to other, more subliminal messages. What sort of character does the client seem to be? How do they like to dress? What kind of pictures do they have on the wall? Appropriately enough for a designer of couches, analysing psyches seems to play an important part in the

The next stage is the production of what Ward calls "stream of consciousness" sketches; pages of rapidly drawn design ideas that fit the general sense he has of the customer's wishes. Clients can then pick the elements they like from the drawings, and the design begins to take shape. The final stage is to produce a couple of 3-D maquettes, an invalnable aid to anyone not used to visualising the two dimensions of a drawing as a three-dimensional object.

Some buildings seem to have an aura being in them just feels right - and you may ask whether Ward's furniture enjoys a similar pulling power. It is a test that Brenda the sofa sails through.

"People seem to gravitate towards it." says Brenda the owner. "If you just saw a picture of it you might think 'oooh', but everyone who comes into this room seems to plonk themselves straight down on it." Richard Joseph Ward, it seems, has more

about £3,000. He can be contacted at his Ward has developed his own way over Shoreditch studio on 0171-729 6768:

GAMES

DO NOT PASS GO – OR WHY $G_t = \{G_t^L + t \mid G_t^R + t\}$ WILLIAM HARTSTON

A unique event took place this week in California with deep implications for the mathematics of games and for the game of Go in particular. To understand what happened, we need to start with a book. On Numbers and Games, written in 1975 by the then Cambridge mathematician John Conway, who has long been esteemed as the world's leading authority on the mathematics of games.

In his book, Conway introduced the concept of the "temperature" of a game, which is, roughly speaking, the amount you stand to gain by playing a single move (the theory applies neatly only to games in which making a move cannot make your position worse). Positions in which large gains stand to be made by the player whose turn it is to move are called "hot": they become "cold" if only small changes in the balance of the position can occur, or even "frozen" if no move makes any difference. whatsoever to the position. Conway's "Temperature Theory" envisaged a method of cooling games down. The formula in the headline above comes from his recipe for a cooled version G_t of game G.

Last Tuesday, Elwyn Berlekamp, professor of mathematics at Berkeley, put the theory to practical use involving the game of Go. For those unfamiliar

with this ancient oriental game, all you need to know is that it is played on a 19-by-19 board by two players, who alternately place black and white stones on the playing surface. Groups of enemy stones may be captured by surrounding them, and very simple rules determine whether a group of stones lives or dies. The final result of the game is determined by the number of squares on the board occupied or surrounded by each player.

In recent years, computer programmers have been increasingly interested in the game of Go but have been frustrated by an inability to place numerical values on a position in a useful way. Part of the trouble has been the top Japanese players' habit of talking in vague terms about "shape rather than giving programmers any concrete analytical concepts they can get their teeth into.

Berlekamp had the idea of getting round this problem by applying Conway's cooling algorithm. The result was a game of "environmental Go" between two former Chinese professionals, Rui Naiwei, a former world women's champion, and her husband Jiang Zhujiu - both now resident in the US. The game involved a traditional Go board and stones, surrounded by 40 tokens with values marked

on them from 20 down to 1/2 in half-point increments. On each move a player could either make a move on the Go board or take the highest remaining token. So, if you think the value of the first move is more than 20 points, you play a move; if not you take the 20-point token.

Play began with tokens being grabbed, but a divergence of opinion clearly showed when Rui started placing stones on the board, while Jiang continued accumulating tokens. Never has a game of Go been conducted in a manner that gave such precise information about the players' valuation of their moves, nor have the players themselves ever had to make such quantitative judgements.

At the end, the final scores, calculated as a sum of squares and tokens, showed that Riu, playing White, had won by 21/2 points, though the players, misunderstanding one aspect of the scoring rules. thought that Jiang had won by half a point. But everyone - Go players and mathematicians alike thought it had been a splendid game.

Information on Go may be found on the web at: http://www.britgo.demon.co.uk or from the British Go Association on 01600-712934.

PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Dick Francis, 77, ex-champion jockey,

My son Felix said that if he ever went on Mastermind, he'd take as his subject the books of Dick Francis. And then, blow me if the BBC didn't telephone to ask if he would prepare some questions for a candidate who's chosen the life of Dick Francis as his subject.

Felix and I were in Hamburg on the day of the recording, but we flew back to Manchester, and Felix got us a helicopter so that we arrived in Blackpool just before the programme started. The contestant was fabulous; he got only one question wrong the name of the man who had joined me in editing a number of exciting adventure stories.

I suppose cricket was the first game I ever played - on the green outside my grandfather's farm in South Wales. But I was never very good at it, as I haven't an eye for a

I played more when I started racing. My. first job was riding for George Owen, who

had a stable at Cholmondeley Castle in Cheshire, and I think I was included in the team because I always appealed - if I thought the ball touched someone, or hadn't touched someone, although I probably couldn't see it. I played a bit when I started riding for Peter Cazalet, who trained the Queen Mother's horses, but, by the time I moved back to Berkshire, I had a new passion.

My wife's godmother lived in Norfolk, and she and her husband kept a boat on the Broads. As they got older, it became too much for them, and in 1956 they sold it to us. We took it up and down the Thames, and even out into the North Sea. And it was or that particular boat that I started writing

Dick Francis is currently working on 'Field of Thirteen', his first collection of short stories, which will be published in September by Michael Joseph.

Long railway journeys and dark evenings i will be enlivened by any of his 37 other titles — £5.99 each in paperback, from Pan Mucmillan.

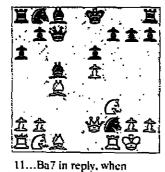
CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON

In the 19th century, chesswriters liked to pretend that a game could be won through creativity alone. Out of a balanced position, one player would, by sheer force of intellect, conjure some magnificent idea that forced victory. The first world champion. Wilhelm Steinitz. poured cold realism on that romantic viewpoint by pointing out that you cannot lose a game without making a

The true creative art of winning lies in the ability to manufacture opportunities for your opponent to go wrong. In most decisive games. however, you still have the feeling that the result owed more to the loser's errors than the winner's brilliance.

Today's game, from the recent New York Open, is a real battle of ideas. White's 6.Qe2, 7.dxc5 and 8.e4 in the opening is an attempt to get the game out of traditional Queen's Gambit accepted lines and seize an initiative with a quick push of the epawn, Black's 8...Qc7 challenges White to play 9.e5, which allows the little combination with 9...Ng4 and 10...Nxf2 (see diagram). After 3 e3 e6 11.Rxf2 Bxf2+ 12.Kxf2 b5 Black will win one of the white hishops.

Louivan must have been prepared for this, because it is 8 e4 Qc7 not a new idea, and his 11.64 was probably the result of good homework. Black should probably have settled for



12.Nbd2 gives White a good lead in development for his pawn. Dlugy's attempt to grab an instant draw with 11...Nh3+ and 12...NE+ allowed a splendid sacrificial

15.Ne4 threatened a check on do and forced the black king to castle, when 16.Nf6+! increased White's investment to a whole rook. After that, however, the attack was irresistible, 20...Qxc4 would have lost to 21.Bd6+ Ke8 22.Qg8+, and at the end 23...Qb6 24.Rd1 leaves Black helpless against the threat of

White: Smbat Lputyan Black: Maxim Dlugy 1 d4 d5 13 Rtf2 Bxf2 2 c4 dxc4 14 Nbd2 Ba7 15 Ne4 0-0 16 Nfn+ gxf6

4 Bxc4 Nf6 5 Nf3 c5 17 exf6 Nd7 6 Qc2 a6 18 Qd2 Rd8 7 dxc5 Bxc5 _19 Qg5+ Kf8 20 Bf4 Qc6 21 Rd1 Nxf6 9 e5 Ng4 10 0-0 Nxf2 22 Rxd8+ Ke7 11 h4 Nh3+ 23 Ne5 resigns 12 Kb1 ND+

CONCISE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

Gathered (6) Each (6) Consequences (9) Anger (4) 10 Seep (4)

Early invader (6) 14 Young bird (6) 15 Look into again (6) 17 Part of flower (6)

19 Sussex hills (5) 20 Quote (4) 23 Fortification (9) 24 Sunburnt (6)

PC screen symbol (4)

25 Over there (6)

River crossing etc (5)

Look up to (6) Enthusiastic about (4) Result (6) Make worse (9) Flower (9) Destined (5) Stories (5) Modern (6) Accustomed (6)

Married woman (6)

Make more profound (6)

୍ 😘 🥬 🗣 🗣

Unharmed (4)

At all events (6)

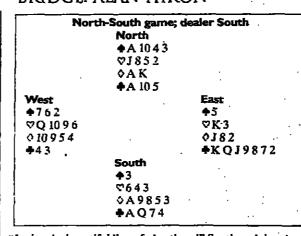
18 Deliver (6)

21 Merit (4) 22 Metal (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Cosy, 3 Labourer (Cause celebre), 9 Binge, 10 Insipid, 11 Ann. 13 Libertine, 14 Waters, 16 Repair, 18 Dirt-track, 20 Dab. 22 Willing, 23 Speed, 25 Royalist, 26 Tree, DOWN: 1 Cobra, 2 Sun. 4 Akimbo, 5 Observe, 6 Reprimand, 7 Red deer, 8 Cell, 12 Naturally, 14 Widower, 15 Retrial, 17 Haggis, 19 Kiss, 21 Badge, 24 Ear.

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON

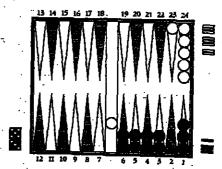


"I missed a beautiful line of play there!" South exclaimed after this deal, "But you made it, didn't you?" his puzzled partner asked. "Oh yes, but as the cards lie, the alternative was much more elegant." There was no time for him to expound before the next hand was dealt, and I wondered if, like Fermat's reputed proof of his Last Theorem, it might be lost for ever. See if you can spot the other line in Six Spades, but here is how the play in fact went.

South ended in Six Spades after East had made a high pre-emptive bid in clubs, and West led \$4. After winning with dummy's ace, declarer ruffed a club in hand and drew two rounds of trumps, finding them 3-1. There was no chance now of a complete elimination, but, after cashing ♦ A.K. South ruffed dummy's last club, took ♦ Q, and ruffed his losing diamond. Then he played the ace and another heart. It did not matter whether East unblocked or not; he had either to concede a ruff and discard, or the defenders were reduced to only one heart trick. It was, for most people, elegant enough - a successful partial elimination play.

It took me some time to find the alternative, but try this: Without touching diamonds, declarer ruffs out the clubs (using a trump for an entry) and cashes the remaining trumps, discarding 74 from hand. This leaves dummy with VJ.8.5.2 ♦ A,K and South with VA.7 ♦ Q,7,6,2 while West has to find a discard from ♥Q,10,9 ♦ 10,9,5,4. If he throws a diamond, South has four tricks in the suit; if he parts with a heart, then a heart to South's seven establishes dummy. The neat thing about this variation is that South does not even need © Q! It would not be so good if East held, say, ♥ K,10, so perhaps South's real-life play was better.

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



One of the main ways that people develop their skill at a game is to study its history and previous matches between good players. Chess and bridge have flourished not only because they are good games in themselves but also because chess games and bridge

hands have been so well documented over the years. By way of contrast, the first backgammon match to be recorded was only in 1977. Many of the significant improvements in playing strength over the last 20 years can be directly attributed to the fact that we can now study a wealth of master games. Backgammon is played at too fast a pace for players to record their own moves but third parties can easily do so. Alternatively the moves of most tournament finals can be transcribed from video recordings. I shall be going through an entire game in this column in a few weeks' time.

Notation was also a problem in the early days, but the notation I use is now standard - you will find the odd exception but they are becoming rarer. Finally, there is the problem of diagrammatic representation. In the early days of this column I used some software written for me by a colleague. About 18 months ago I switched to using the Monte Carlo true type font which anyone with a PC running under Windows can use. The font costs only \$32 (including airmail postage). It has recently been upgraded so that it can now show men that have been borne off the board.

As an example, the position above is taken from one of my recent matches. It is double match point and Black has a 53 to play. How would you play it: 6/1, 6/3 or 5/off, 5/2? We shall discuss this position next week. The Monte Carlo Font can be obtained from Steve Smith, Alpine Electronics, 526 West 7th Street, Powell, WY 83435, US.4.

ves [

A taste of

Nikki Spencer samples the riches of the Isle of Wight

Think of garlic, and the Mediterranean may come to mind, but you have only to take a short ferry ride across the Solent to find the pungent bulb being grown commercially right here in Britain. Garlic has become so important to the Isle of Wight that in August, when the harvest is over, the village of Newchurch regularly hosts a two-day garlic festival. Here you can sample garlic in every conceivable form, including ice-cream and liquorice.

The bulb was first cultivated on the island about 20 years ago, when Colin Boswell, a commercial grower, decided to try something different from the usual tomatoes and sweetcorn. He experimented with a variety of French mountain garlic, and he hasn't looked back.

Colin, who supplies many large supermarkets, puts his success down to the fact that the island boasts the sunniest place in Britain - Sandown. This is particularly important when it comes to drying the garlic once it has been lifted from the soil.

A field of garlic looks a bit like a field of leeks (the word "garlic" means "spear leek"). The bulbs have to be pulled carefully from the ground by hand. "It's hard labour." says Colin. "We tend to use school kids between 14 and 18, because they're pretty fit." The bulbs are left to dry in the sun for a few days; if the weather isn't good they are put into glasshouses and dried with artificial driers:

"When you touch the gartic, the outer leaves should then just shatter and fall off, and you are left with a glistening white bulb underneath," says Colin, who claims that he never tires of the stuff. "I smell it every day but still salivate when I do."



Garlic trails

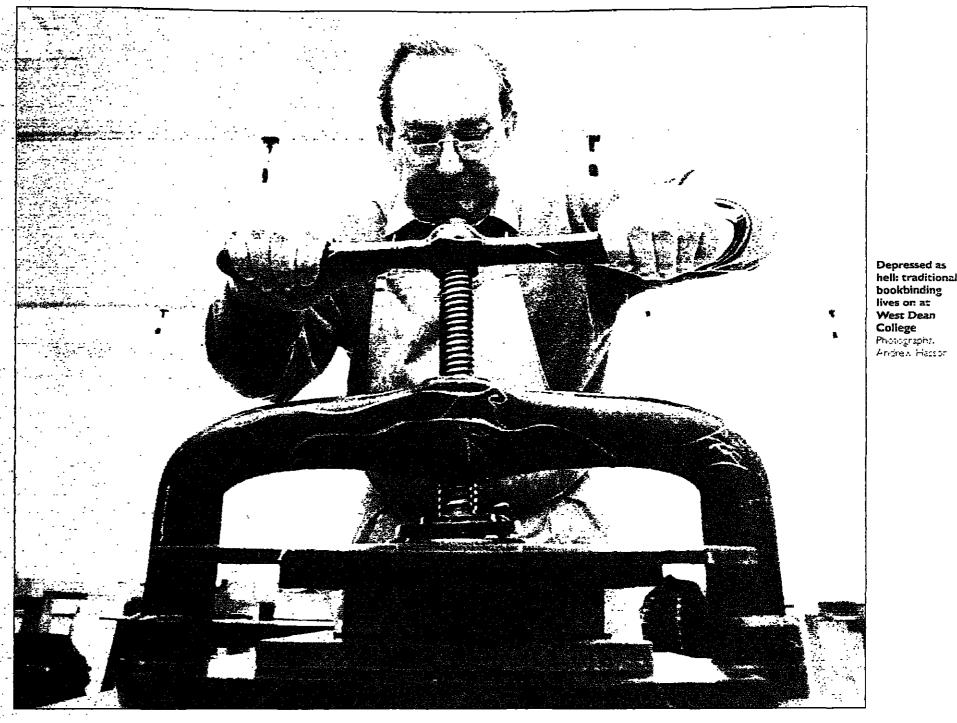
• The garlic festival takes place in Newchurch on the Isle of Wight on 22 and 23 August. As well as the garlic marquee, which has all kinds of garlic-flavoured food and drink, there will be a variety of entertainments, including escapologists, pig trials and Wild West shows. More details from Island Partners

(01983 853411).

• If you want to sample garlic shampoo (unscented), garlic bubblegum and more, the Garlic Information Service (a free helpline for garlic-lovers) runs a mail-order service. Call 01424 892440.

● Those who love garlic but hate peeling it can get someone else to do it for them. You can now buy pots of fresh, ready-peeled garlic in branches of Sainsbury; it will also soon be available at Tesco:

● If ordinary garlic isn't strong enough for you, try wild garlic. This increasingly trendy ingredient is currently appearing on restaurant menus. If you know what you're looking for, between now and May you can pick your own in woodlands all over the country, or you can buy it from wild food specialists such as Taste of the Wild, London Stone Business Centre, Broughton Street, London SW8 (0171-498 5654).



A pressing engagement

You may have a small collection of ancient, weathered books carefully preserved at the bottom of a storage chest or piled up in the corner of a spare room. Perhaps there's a large family Bible, school prizes won by grandparents – even an early edition of Wordsworth's complete works. And many of these books may have the covers hanging by a thread, or be so fragile that no one dares turn a page.

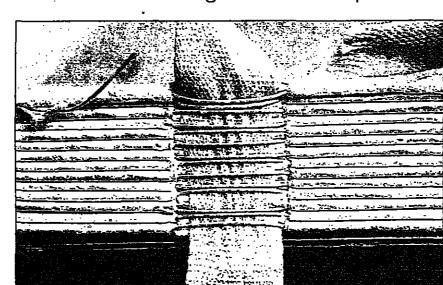
Of course, bookbinding can give those delicate old treasures a new lease of life. It is easy to learn, and a skill that keeps many book lovers busy repairing favourite volumes well into old age. I know one woman who continued bookbinding classes into her mid-nineties, when she was still able to produce some splendid work.

At West Dean college, set in 6,000 acres of rolling Sussex countryside, bookbinding students have access to presses and cutting techniques that have been used for centuries. Nothing so modern as a guillotine for cutting or trimming pages is used in the light, any workshop where the tutor, John Robinson, explains the knack of giving battered volumes a much needed face-lift.

All the students need for this five-day course are a pair of scissors, a 12-in ruler, a pencil, a rubber, a sharp craft knife, an apron and, of course, some books. In the class I joined these ranged from a huge old church Bible to the early works of the cartoonist Gary Larson – originally bought as a paperback, and destined for a newly made hardback binding.

On the first day of tuition the students make and bind a book that can then be used to take notes on the binding techniques they will learn. On the day I was there, one of the students, Anji Scofield – a recently retired assistant nursing director with the RAF – said: "I was thrilled at what

Only Luddites need apply ... Sally Staples went on a course caught in a time warp



I was able to achieve on day one. I'm a complete beginner, and after a single day I could produce a book. Now I'm doing another one for my mother, and I've bought along some tattered provide of Green's churchand textbooks to rangin."

copies of Gregg's shorthand textbooks to repair."

To make the pages for the notebook, students take A1 sheets of paper, cut them in half and then fold each half into quarters, giving eightpage sections. The next stage is to bind the sections together with tape, which will involve some sewing with a special needle and waxed thread.

Once the sections have been pressed in a line press, students calculate where the tapes should be placed and small indentation marks are made on the spines of the pages. While they are still

in the press, a small hacksaw is used to make tiny

notches in the paper, where tapes will fit.

The pressed pages are then placed on a small wooden frame, and the tapes secured at the bottom. The holes in the paper act as a guide for the needle, and each section is sewn firmly to the tape. The paper is then pressed a second time.

guillotine."

The five-day is legal near Chic costs from £37.

The next stage involves sticking end-papers on to either end of the sewn sections. Then a kind of net material called a "mull" is fixed on to the spine with water-soluble glue and covered with two layers of brown paper. The mull will later be tucked inside the hard cover, securing the pages into the case.

Alan Bryant, a semi-retired finance director from Windsor, was eager to make the case for his book, and had measured out two sheets of card and a single strip for the spine. Next he cut a sheet of buckram (costing around £6 a metre, and available from the college shop) which would be glued on to the card to form the cover.

Titling the cover can be a tricky business. A selection of tools, each with one letter of the alphabet, are left to heat on a hot plate. Students make a dummy of the words they want and then line up the rough copy on the spine to act as a guide. A piece of gold foil is inserted between the copy and the spine, and when the tools are hot enough the words can be printed. The amount of pressure needed to achieve clear lettering must be learnt through practice.

Meanwhile. Elwyn Walker, an area pub manager, had brought along a selection of old books whose pages needed trimming. He had been using an ancient wooden plough press to smooth down all the rough edges by moving a blade back and forth over the book, held in position by a vice. "It's so satisfying working like this," he said. "Much better than using a guillotine."

The five-day residential course, at West Dean College, near Chichester in East Sussex (01243 811301), costs from £373; for non-residential students the cost is from £244.

DON'T MISS TOMORROW'S...

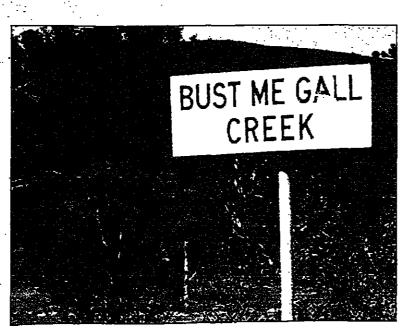
INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

IRAVEL

IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD!

Pages of great holiday ideas for Australia and New Zealand

plus: A short stay in Copenhagen



YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HOLIDAYS



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MIKE ROWBOTTOM

MARATHON MADNESS

I WONDER how many Tele- as Posh Spice and David Beck- who haven't tried it before-en- and a wife in Hertford and a jubbles will be running in tomarathon? Officially there are two -both, for the record, Laa-Laa. But I fancy there will be a late run on pronged headgear.

mass of conventionally-clad runners have left their starting point in Charlton Way, the road will be thronged with all manner of strange and wondrous back-markers - what the official guide refers to as the "novelty and fancy dress exponents". Think of the bar in Star Wars.

Double it. You're getting there. Among the attractions this time round are Noddy. Fred Flintstone. Elvis Presley - all the usual suspects, in fact. Enterprisingly, one entrant is coming

ham. This will involve wearing tailed wearing a nine-foot high morrow's Flora London a Manchester United shirt on his right side, and a little black Gucci dress on his left. There only remains the problem of whether to smile or not - 2 lop-

Twenty minutes after the sided grin is probably the best they? I mean it's like starting the solution here. Animals, of course, on course, will also be widely represented. There will be runners in the guise of gorillas – as it were – camels, emus, hedgehogs, bees, rhinoceroses... Seriously. What is going on

> otherwise sensible people to become party turns? To gain some insight into the mind of the marathon novelty I asked Nigel Braggins, who last vear ran as the Matterhorn.

> This - for the benefit of those

here? What is it that persuades

papier maché representation of the mountain in question.

Fun for a party, perhaps, but these people have to run 26 miles and 385 yards, haven't day with a fixed grin and grinning all day until you go to bed.

"I was able to run in a reasonably normal style last year," Braggins said. Was that, I wondered, normal style given that he was the Matterhorn, or simply normal normal? He clarified the matter. "I was jucky it was a still day. If the wind had blown, I

would probably have taken off." What concerns me about Nigel Braggins is that he basn't always been like this. Here is a lost to the world of the sensifamily man with two children

graphic design business in the West End, who runs six London Marathons, sensibly clothed, raising money for the Action Research charity. Excellent.

He turns into a Swiss Alp. "I used to think the people who dressed up to run were crazy," he said. "My attitude was that it was difficult enough running a marathon as it was, so why on earth were these people wearing gorilla outits?

Fine. But then what happens?

"But whatever it was in my brain that told me that this was стазу I must have lost as I crossed the finish line one year."

Once that safety feature had disappeared, Braggins was ble. Six months after running as

his fund-raising by climbing it. outside the world record for a

Tomorrow he will toe the line standing inside a specially adapated kayak - that is, a kayak with a hole in it. And yes, later this year he will travel to Nepal to kayak through the white water hell that is the River Sett. Just in case you worry, he has fixed rubber bumpers to his kayak to avoid injuring other runners.

Terry Cole doesn't make any bones about the fact that he has taken leave of his senses. He revels in it. After juggling through his last Loudon Marathon, two years ago, you would have thought he was satisfied. Far from it. For a start, a delayed getaway meant he only completed the course in 3 hours 41 minutes - which, as

juggling marathon.

And world records are what Terry is very interested in. His entries in recent editions of the Guinness Book of Records speak of an unmatched capacity when it comes to balancing beer glasses on his chin (60). Or milk crates on his chin (29). Or cigar boxes on his chin (220).

Jimmy Hill - read it and weep. "I would describe myself as a circus stuntman who breaks world records," said this 39year-old from Gants Hill. "I do a lot of shows in clubs with samurai swords. I put an apple on someone's head and cut it in half without touching a hair on their head.

Did he get many volun-

Terry has been a hit down recently after his failed attempt to break the world crawling record at a track in Walthamstow. "I was nowhere: near my target," he said. "Then it started to rain."

But come wind or rain tomorrow, Terry will be out there, in a neon-bright pink top har and tails. That's not all, of course. He is tap dancing the whole way. And at every mile marker, he will pause to complete one hundred one arm press-ups. So that's 2,600 onehanded press-ups. Hang on. That might beat his own world record of 2.346. No. He did that in an hour. On broken glass. As

Marathon prepares for a Mac attack

Athletics Correspondent

CELEBRATIONS could be loud and long in the numerous Irish pubs along the route of tomorrow's London Marathon. All the indications are that one big Mac, the 1996 winner and last year's runner up Liz Mc-Colgan, is about to be eclipsed by another - Catherina McK-

Such has been the form of this farmer's daughter from County Cavan that she goes into the women's race as clear favourite despite the presence of the redoubtable McColgan, the defending champion. Joyce Chepchumba of Kenya, and Marian Sutton, twice winner of the Chicago marathon and confident of improving on her London best of sixth place.

McColgan should never be Balmoral Challenge race, where she produced the second fastest over five miles, indicates that doubted strength.

settled tomorrow morning and the forecasts speak of the land's representative is hardly likely to be put off. But nor will World Cross Country Champiver medals, that she relishes tough conditions.

McKieman's winning time in last September's Berlin Marathon - 2hr 23min 44sec was the fastest ever by a woman debutant, Since then, her preparations have gone smoothly and although she has been careful not to put any pressure on herself with rash predictions. her appearance in London earlier this week gave a new lease of life to the phrase "quietly confident".

McKiernan will have a huge amount of support. The travelling group of friends and relatives who have always been cross country campaigns will be

Yesterday's statement by the wanted the pacemakers to come noon tomorrow,

reach the halfway point in a relatively sensible time of around 72 minutes indicated that she will be approaching her task with circumspection. And perhaps cutting loose over the final couple of miles when she considers the time to be right.

The men's race is a far more complex affair. The recent form of the defending champion. Antonio Pinto of Portugal, has been as impressive as that of McKiernan. But his hopes of retaining the title and equalling Dionicio Ceron's record of three London wins will be tempered by the knowledge that he faces a field that is as strong as any assembled in the event's 18-year history.

Josia Thugwane. South Africa's first black Olympic champion, has built on his momentous achievement in the Atlanta Olympics. Last Deformance two weeks ago in the all record to 2hr 07min 28sec in of-race dish - pasta. winning at Fukuoka.

brought to an end a sequence If the weather continues un- of three marathon victories after moving up the distance.

Add to that the presence of possibility of showers - Scot- Steve Moneghetti, world bronze medallist last year at the age of 34 and one of the most experi-McKiernan, who has proved enced marathon runners world - born in Wales, brought with her performances in the around, Elijah Lagat of Kenya. who won last September's onships, with four successive sil- Berlin event in 2hr 07min 41sec, and Pinto's task appears even

The British challenge will come from Paul Evans, third here in 1996, and Jon Brown. cross-country champion Paul who has the attitude and ability to make a big name for himself at the event, if not tomorrow, then soon.

The main impact of any fitful weather could fall upon Lagat and Thugwane, neither of whom will relish rain. Thugwane will be hoping for a element outing if only for the sake of his

The event has already managed to seize one record before it gets underway. A record there to cheer her on during the number of 41.251 entries have been accepted from more than 94,000 applicants. The event's prestige is unlikely to be anyorganisers that McKieman had thing other than enhanced



Brown on efficiency drive to success

THE waitress arrived with Jon

The man who, for many, rep-Then there is the world resents the future of British time she has ever recorded champion. Abel Anton of marathon running, tucked in As Spain, whose fourth place be- well he might. Even the whiphind Thugwane in Fukuoka pet-thin Brown has never looked so lean and hungry.

Tomorrow's London Marathon - his second venture at the distance - has motivated him to achieve a peak of fitness

he has never previously reached. At 27, this athlete of the up in Sheffield, now living with wife and 18-month old son in Vancouver - has established an impressive set of credentials en route to his ultimate challenge.

In December 1996, a week after defeating Kenya's world Tergat at a race near Bilbao, he won the European cross-country title with a sublimely assured performance in the Belgian town of Charleroi.

On the track, he has run 13min 19,78sec for 5,000 metres. and last year finished a 10,000m in 27min 27.47sec, making him the second fastest Briton at the distance behind Eamonn Martin, the last British winner of the London Marathon, in 1993.

Despite highly respectable performances from the likes of Richard Nerurkar, who was fifth last year, and Paul Evans. third in 1996, no home runner has looked like retaining the

Evans, now 37, will try again Brown's lunch vesterday, re- this year, But he acknowledges moving the cover with some- that Brown is the one to keep thing of a flourish to reveal the British marathon running at only one. "Nobody apart from Jon is coming through," Evans

> Brown's own thoughts on his British contemporaries became very clear a couple of years ago, when he criticised their lack of commitment after he had se- success, and there isn't one. cured his 10,000m place for the Olympics by winning the trials.

His views have not changed. "I don't feel other British runners are willing to make the kind of sacrifices I have." he said. "I have worked hard for years to become an efficient runner. Sometimes other run-

Mike Rowbottom meets the cool, calm and collected runner on whose shoulders underestimated - and her per- cember he lowered his nation- marathon runner's staple eve- the top level - and, sadily, the rest home hopes of a victory tomorrow

The Flora London Marathon 1998

help them. "It's as if they think I have some kind of secret formula for

You've got to look at your whole lifestyle to see if it is working efficiently for you. But asked when his last competithese guys just go back to their old bad habits."

Brown's preparations for his first marathon, in Chicago last October, were hampered by a persistent hip injury. Despite

ners come up to me and ask me that, he managed a time of 2hr for advice, but I feel like I am 10min 13sec, a more than use- in what I do and I know myself

> The hip injury disappeared in January thanks to a new routine of stretching exercises. But Brown has not exactly gone crazy with the racing since then. Yesterday he was tive race had been. "You tell me," he said laconically, "It was about three months ago." Did that not represent a problem, the questioner continued? "Not for me," replied the

to have patience." On one recent training trip to Boulder, Colorado, Brown recalls seeing a group of British runners who he felt were missing the point. "They were just going crazy, just destroying themselves," he said. "They

performances will transfer when

I do down to sea level to race.

The key to altitude training is

Kenny Dalglish sound like Pe-

"I can spend a long time

ter Ustinov.

whose public pro- were not helping themselves at

nouncements tend to make all - it was almost laughable. "In athletics, you have got to be totally detached. You can't be constrained by anything, without races," he said later, whether it's location, or even "because I have total confidence emotion."

Brown has always intended ularly at altitude since 1993, and can run a decent 10,000m." he I can work out exactly how my - said, "but if you look at some of the times African runners have been achieving in the last few years, they might as well be Martians.

> "In the marathon, the advantages the African runners have are lost after a certain point. You still see top Europeans preparing well and making a big impact on the event.

"At last year's World Championships the Spaniards got it spot on with Abel Anton and Martin Fiz winning gold and silver. I've raced against those two for years, and I don't believe they are better than me."

4...

4: 3

Are A ...

Cool detachment is something which appears to come naturally to Brown. But at a deeper level, he is fully engaged with his sport.

"It helps to have a target," he said. "And the London Marathon is such a big target for me that I don't feel I need to do little races. "I'm in the best shape I've

ever been, and I'm really anxious to get out there and see what I can do " The results could be fascinating; and at odds of 40-1 to

win, Brown looks worth a few quid to anyone with a mind to

My chance to run free from the prison of the swimming pool

LAST SUMMER, I sprinted victory over the Persians, and from the tube to eatch the last then dropped dead. Who could train to Tunbridge Wells from resist? London Bridge, Collapsing in a heap with my lungs burning. I knew I had to start training again. One year after retiring from international swimming had reduced me to this. A quiv-

ering, out of shape, ex-athlete. I had no desire to return to the pool and a friend insisted I join him in the London Marathon. A national carnival. the triumph of mind over body. ioining a tradition dating back to 490 BC when Pheidippides ran to announce the Greek

As an Olympic swimmer, I know the secrets of the elite. I would apply the same knowledge of nutrition, mental preparation and planning to my running. I had four months left. The challenge was on.

The pursuit of a clearly defined goal has become second nature to me. So. too, has aiming high. Running a marathon puts you in a minority of millions: running sub-four hours is good. for a sub-three hour marathon.

Fortunately I am also good at reassessing my goals, which became: can do four hours: could do 3:45; just might do 3:30. Run after run was spent calculating split times and pace times in my head. Five miles. then eight miles, then 10 and up to 18 miles, holding eight min-

utes 15 seconds per mile. Like each swim, each run started with a 10 minute warm up and finished with at least 20 minutes of stretching. This was not something I forced myself to do, but simply the routines for a non-athlete: so I started out of a normal session. It helps re-ning, I don't, I can't immediately covery and, crucially, prevents feel the difference between the

Olympian James Parrack is more at home in the water than on the road, but tomorrow he tackles the London Marathon

9.00 Elite Women

■Green Start: (St Johan's Park) Seniors and Football Challenge ▼Blue Start: (Shooters Hall Road) Women's Bite, Men's Elite, Wheelchair racers

Red Start: (Greenwich Park) Main start

Training is as hard as you want it to be and the pain is no and alone. different whether running or swimming. In the water, I know

exactly what my mind and body

can do and what will happen if

I keep pushing. But with run-

injury. When consistency is the good pain of training and the key, injury must be avoided at bad pain of an injury. Even all costs. when I ran with friends, this ignorance made me feel anxious

> Running on my own freed me from the prison of the swimming pool and I relished the chance to run through

in the last few miles. The medianathema to the élite, a no-go area littered with guilt and failure. It was an area I eschewed for eight years but now had the permission to embrace. My training this time was all about consistency and the progression that comes science.

from a willingness to train. know is the one at the end of from the water in the cool fields and enjoy the senses of the pool with a timing pad. Most morning. Bright sunshine will Curie Cancer Care, 47 Dartford sound and smell. Often. I did runners hit the wall at around be filtering through the trees Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13-

myself of the joy of backing off rived from carbohydrates dries clean air. Running will be an up and the body switches to its exhilarating celebration of occity of the comfort zone is fat stores. The theory is that refuelling every five miles will avoid this burn out. Coupled with a technique that sports psychologists call "anchoring" using one thought or image to. focus on effortless running, the I know I can go 18 miles. The wall should vanish in a puff of

At 20 miles, my anchor will My big concern though is be running at Bewel reservoir • James Parrack is running for 20 miles, when the energy de- as I take deep lungfuls of 3TE.

body and soul.

have set my goals, set the race plan, be fuelled and hydrated. There will be an enormous. crowd to cheer us at every step. question to which I'm about to find the answer is, what happens

"the wall". The only wall I in Kent, with the mist rising Manie Curie Cancer Care. All donations can be sent to Marie

Tomorrow morning I will

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Swiss A Seven Sisters ready to go to the ball

Llanelli in the biggest rugby game in their history tomorrow. Tim Glover reports.

THERE IS no official bookmaker in Seven Sisters but that doesn't mean that bets aren't agered. Since beating Gamdiffaith in the quarter-finals at Maes Dafydo a fortnight ago. the odds on Seven winning the

Since that historic day, when they became the first junior club to reach the last four, very little has gone right for Seven in their preparations for the most momentous match in their 101-year history - a semi-final against Llanelli at the Gnoll, Neath's ground, tomorrow.

Welsh Cup have fallen from

66-1 to 50-1. By rights they should have risen to 500-1.

They've lost their captain, Mark Chilcott, with a broken leg and were beaten at home by Pencoed 72-7 in Division Four of the Welsh League. In addition, last week they were knocked out of the semi-finals of the OG Davies Cup, a Neath and District Competition, by Resolven, a club even more microscopic than Seven.

And that's not all: "We're in the middle of a flu epidemic," reported Dai Watts, the club's cretary. Seven is not the sort of place anybody would visit for a holiday. "In terms of the weather we are always two overcoats worse off than Neath," Watts said. Seven Sisters is one of a

string of what were once mining villages at the head of the Dulais River in the valley dividing Swansea and Neath. The village, which has a population of 2,400, is so called because Evan Evans Bevan, a South Wales industrialist, named his mine Seven Sisters to commemorate the fact that he had seven sisters. The last working mine in the area closed in 1989. since when, according to Watts: The main passime has been unemployment."

This is a one hearse town although Dai the Daffodil, arias Dai Roberts who coaches the team, makes a living as a florist. There will be no stay at a linury. hotel, no hotline for tickets opportunities for agents to ex-

the call of professionalism was things in perspective. This is a West Wales League," Gethin, a to pay a win bonus of £40. If dream for us."



Valley of dreams: Seven Sisters, whose rugby pitch is surrounded by evidence of the town's past as part of the South Wales mining industry, will make history if they defeat Llanelli in the semi-finals of the Welsh Cup at Neath tomorrow. Team coach Dai Roberts (below), who makes his living as a florist, is hoping is team will blossom under pressure

they draw or lose the players do not receive a penny. That incentive applies only to the

"The Cup is different." Watts said. Even if they win they will only get a couple of pints. I haven't a clue what we'll make out of the match. We money. All that goes to the a few bob out of it. A lot of peo-Seven Sisters's answer to uation but we've got to keep the team was a power in the feature of our national game."

terday the whole squad were invited to Debenhams in Swansea blazers, trousers, shirts and ties. Dead posh.

One man who is supposed to be neutral but who has Seven

going to the ball in style. Yes- bridge University, said. "The memory of those games still burns brightly and I hope that town centre to be kitted out in youngsters today will wish to emulate their present heroes as I did all those years ago. There is no doubt that the future well-being of Welsh rugby is in don't get a share of the gate Sisters at heart is Dennis their hands. Those players of Gethin, the new secretary of the yesteryear played hard and enup in Seven Sisters during the marvellous if that spirit of enple say we should milk the sit- Fifties and early Sixties when joyment could again become a

As for Llanelli, who began useful full-back for Neath the season by playing the tour- club like us shouldn't be there. said.

At least the Sisters will be Grammar School and Cam- ing All Blacks, they may appear to be the equivalent of an old bull frog casting a weary eye over a passing insect but, before any prey is demolished, it is customary to observe certain table

> Rather than admit that their intention is to thrash Tom Thumb to within an inch of his life, they will declare that noththe utmost respect.

they'll be out to prove that a wen. "I don't like violence," she

opposition. Our aim is to give good account of ourselves. When all this is over we'll be old Tomorrow the club will have

the support of almost the entire village, not to mention the 25-strong Dulais Valley Silver Band. In the history of Seven Sisters, Watts is one of four club. It is possible that the only person remaining in the village Watts isn't fooled. "I think tomorrow will be his mother Ol-



Distracted Bristol a perfect foe for Falcons

By Chris Hewett

SUCCES

NEWCASTLE, the increasingly fidgety leaders of the Allied Dunbar Premiership, could not have picked a better weekend to take on Bristol at Kingston Park- of a scrum-half at 32, finally If that assertion sounds peculiar in the extreme - Bristol's abject performance this season suggests there is never a bad time to play them - it is true to say that the fallen giants of West Country night will be at their most borizontal tomorrow afternoon.

And do they care? Do they heck. Bristol have had more important things than Newcastle to worry about this week - Robert Jones, Paul Burke, Kevin Maggs and Adam Larkin to name but four - and even though none of those influential players will undertake the thankless task of of Neil Armstrong proportions. keeping their powder dry for the Welford Road this afternoon clear favourites.

attempting to inflict a first home defeat on Dean Ryan's outfit, there was an unmistakeable whiff of optimism about the Memorial Ground yesterday.

Jones, still a master craftsman signed a two-year contract after weeks of "will he, won't he" speculation. Burke and Maggs, two Irish internationals, committed themselves on Thursday - Maggs rejected an offer from Richmond to stay with his home-town club - while Larkin, a 23-yearold Irish-qualified New Zealanfresh terms yesterday. The news may not leave the

entire northern hemisphere open-mouthed in astonishment but for Bristol, the bottom side

dication to people both inside and outside the club that we believe Bristol can become successful again," said Burke, who is likely to succeed Jones as captain. "I want to be part of the rebuilding and the resolution of contract issues will hopefully put us in a position to attract new players during the summer."

The success of any transfer activity is likely to hinge on the outcome of talks between Rugby Football Union negotiators and representatives of English First der of considerable ability agreed. Division Rugby, the clubs' umbrella organisation. Bristol are banking on an expanded 14-team Premiership next season and their decision to tackle Newcastle with only a third of their first-

"Our signing should be an in- play-offs they assume will take place at the end of the season. All of which is of inestimable

value to Newcastle. Tony. Underwood, Alan Tait, Va'aiga Tuigamala, Nick Popplewell, George Graham, Garath Archer, Pat Lam and the mighty Ryan himself are all knackered, to a greater or lesser degree, and Rob Andrew, the Falcons' director of rugby, will not decide until shortly before kick-off exactly which foot-soldiers will be asked to crawl out of the field hospital for another 80 minutes in the front line.

Saracens, the other participants in the Premiership denouement, also have casual-

promises to be far less forgiving; not only do the Tigers feel able Miller on the basis of pure form, but they have never lost a league or cup match to the Londoners on home soil. "They've fought us to a standstill twice already this season and they are still an amazingly hard side to overcome," admitted Mark Evans,

Saracens' director of rugby.

Elsewhere, West Hartlepool and London Scottish bare their respective teeth in what amounts to a Premiership Two promotion decider at Brierton Lane this afternoon while in Wales Ebbw Vale go in search ties - François Pienaar and of a first cup final place. They Kyran Bracken, no less - and take on Newport at Sardis in Premiership One, it is a step choice side suggests they are their tussle with Leicester at Road. Pontypridd, and start as

Lenihan fills Ireland's hole THE most remarkable of Donal Africa this summer. He fills the Gatland, the latest in a long line

Lenihan's many rugby achieveto ignore Austin Healey, ments was his single-handed Richard Cockerill and Eric transformation of a hybrid collection of "doughnuts" - the name by which the Lions' midweek side came to be known during the 1989 Australian campaign - into one of the most effective and supportive secondstrings in the history of British Isles touring parties, writes Chris Hewett.

He has now been asked to work a similar miracle with Ireland who, appropriately enough, have been described as the team with a hole in the middle. Lenihan, capped 52 times as

a second row and one of the few Irish forwards to rival Willie John McBride's popularity as a player and captain, will manage the national side in South Cup on the horizon," said his rugby here in Wales."

gap left by Pat Whelan, who resigned earlier this week and is currently embroiled in an unsavoury controversy over an in a Limerick pub. However, the more signifi-

was the appointment of Warren hooker, as coach for the period up to and including the 2000 Five Nations Championship. Gatland, a quietly combative 34year-old from Waikato, replaced Brian Ashton midway through this year's tournament and in- outside-half has repeatedly exspired pugnacious performances pressed his desire to move but against France and England.

of New Zealanders, including Mike Brewer and John Mitchell who have cut their coaching teeth in Ireland. While his curalleged fracas with a journalist rent international record of played three, lost three is almost certain to be worsened by the cant move in Dublin yesterday Springboks this summer, there was never any serious doubt that Gatland, the former All Black the national union would offer him a degree of permanency.

Welsh Rugby Union executives are continuing to do everything in their power to block Neil Jenkins' proposed transfer from Pontypridd to Bath. The a WRU spokesman said ves-"I am honoured to be offered terday: "Neil has a contract with this job, which is a major chal-us until after the World Cup and lenge with next year's World we would like to see him play

Reservoir log – bobbing about like a crouton in the North Sea



ANNALISA BARBIERI

ON FISHING

;-

er been my favourite type of of the day. fishing. All that deep, still, silent water which harbours monsters. Those dams at one end with their shiny, slippy sides. And lochs, with their inky secrets are just as bad.

I'm hydrophobic and there I was in a little motor boat on Hanningfield reservoir in Cheimsford, atop 600 acres of water. And I wasn't very happy.

Being a hydrophobic fishing correspondent isn't easy, but most of the time, the fear is well under control - it has to be - and no one is any the wiser. And with rivers, especially big Scottish ones, it's not difficult to forget fear and be distracted by their eye-misting beauty.

Last October, deep-sea fishing in Madeira we were floating on 3,000 feet of water and yet I was so at ease I had to be Reservoirs aren't like that.

They're like gigantic soup to have fished the waters dry. bowls, with teeny boats bobbing around like croutons, in an Alice in Wonderland spooky perspective kind of way. When the wind is soft, the stillness is terrifying. Little boat, lots of water, rod in hand with line going into all that water, and you wait for a bite. Terrifying.

Two weeks ago at Hanningmade them look like they stylish of sporting folk. Where-flicking flies in the water. as just the previous week we had

RESERVOIR fishing has nev-dragged off the boat at the end afternoon, we were to catch just afternoon at Hanningfield was I am starting to think them a But the fish was netted, a That was good. I had heard the two fishies, totalling two kilos. The abbatoir-fishermen seemed

> Fishing a reservoir takes particular, and very scientific preparation. First you take the boat out to a good looking piece of water, then you drop anchor, then you lie back and relax in (one hopes) the sun. This is a very important

regime for me, as I have to acclimatise to the realisation field there had just been a com- that, here I am again doing petition and as we took to our something that terrifies me. boat the fishermen came in After half an hour of getting wearing ugly waterproofs that used to the boot, surreptitiously checking for holes, lookworked in abbatoirs. This put me ing for shark fins and Nessie in a bad mood immediately - type bumps in the water, I start one of them took a fancy to fishermen can be the most un- to like it and can think about Pete's Viva with maribou wings

My fishing buddy, Pete, can pulled 23 rainbows from this very barely get out of the car park proved to be so magic at a Scotwater, it was to be different that before he starts casting. That

no different "Fish," he said. "No," I replied with lips firmly set together, "I'm not ready yet. I'm looking at the conditions."

he continued, "you're the fishing correspondent, not the snoozing correspondent." "It's not just about lishing," I retorted, "it's about observing. I am tuning in to the

Five minutes passed. "Fish."

fish's psyche and I have to do this with my eyes closed." But then the conditions changed, the sun disappeared, a bit of a mean wind started to blow and the temperature dropped. This is often when fish start to bite and sure enough.

on a size12 hook. These were the flies that tish trout pond in February and bit good. The Viva with maribou wings is a souped up version of a normal Viva - 1 call it a turbo Viva - because it has and a real rainbow in the sky the black chenille body, silver wire rib and fluorescent green tag (tail) of a normal Viva but with "spoilers", in this case a

plume of black maribou.

As he played it in, he told me to net it. I hate doing this because it means leaning over the hoat, and I hadn't had my half hour of getting used to the water just yet. Plus the nethandle was stuck which meant I had to lean out all the more.

Then it started raining so violently it made the reservoir makes up for it. The sun was choppy, and it felt like we out it was all nice. were in the North Sea. I was by now very unhappy indeed, in one hand, rod in the other, cussing in two European lan- the temperature dropped signing my position in shame. true to form, another fish bit. Farlow's of Pall Mall.

glorious shiny rainbow trout that must have been about three pounds. The rain stopped came out. Ten minutes later all silliness

had stopped and I was casting like a demon, showing off with my right and left-handed casting to make up for earlier patheticness. We decided to set the boat on a drift, which meant drawing in line rather quicker to keep up with the current, but with the wind behind you like this it straightens the line out beautifully on the forward cast, so that more man

Suddenly, with doughnut

fish fought like fury here. Going under the boat (even

though they are not meant to like doing that) and diving so violently the sugar shook off my pastry. But perhaps the sturdy Hardy Sovereign, really meant for sea trout, subdued him too quickly because after only five or so minutes, the fish gave up and was netted and priested. I are him that evening with mash.

As you read this I'll be at Rutland Water, England's biggest reservoir with 3,300 stonking acres of scarey, still water. For those of you who haven't vei. don't forget to renew your rod licences which ran out at the end of March and are pink this year. Nice. And the biggest fishing news of the year so far is that guages and considering re- again. The rain came down and House of Hard; have just bought







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INSPECTION: 7.45em GOING: 5/ course - Heavy, round course - Soft (Heavy patches); Chase course - Good GOTNO: St course - Heavy, nound course - John (newly) page 18.

STALLS: St - stands add, rey - inside DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

STALLS: St - stands add, rey - inside DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

Stalls: St - stands add, rey - inside DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

Stalls: St - stands add, rey - inside DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

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Stands add rey - inside DRAW A

103 (155%)

② LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery 51 wine from 223 ndes gives a success ratio of 225%;

① LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery 51 wine from 195 (123%); T Quinn 17 from 152 (112%).

① FAVOURITIES: 188 with an 547 races (344%).

© LINKERED FIRST TIME: Samlee (visored). Carole's Crusader (330).

2.15 DAVID LLOYD LEISURE HANDICAP (CLASS B) £15,000 added 3YO 1m Penalty Value £9,538 SOURCE SYO 1M Penanty Value \$3,538

527. CLOSE UP (182) (I) (an Carrery) Dustop 97

539. PLORAZI (182) (F 5 Varies) J Ourtop 94

529. APPERIOD (29) (86) (Lucry) Stat) R Hardon 92

6122. VALVE VALVE (17) (I) (I) F 5 3 Crea) S Vocas 90

6124. ARRIGIOUS (6) (I) (100 and Search of Harb I) Lock 90

6125. SEA WACIC (182) G Formati 9 Hab 6 2

620. INDIAN MISSILE (11) (G C Green) Orasport 8 12

630. SUNLEY SEER (18) (83 3 3 3 Jeeps V Charron 8 19

6142. KRISAMBA (6) (G Schrod-Schrier B Median 8 7

2440. BORBYDAZLE (226) (I) (Ars 3 Corred) Dr J Sergil 6 6

10 declared -..... Pat Eddery 10 D Pestier 5 N Day 8

– 10 declared – BETTING: 5-2 Florazi, 7-2 Ambiguous. 13-2 Ambiggio, 7-1 Wild Veriture, 8-1 Close Up, 10-1 Sea Negic, Sunley Seeker, 14-1 others 1997, Arryas & G M Hills 6-1 /3 Hills) crawn 40 11 ran

1997. Anyas & 3 At Nile 6-1 (3 Nils) grawn 4) it rain 1997. Anyas & 3 At Nile 6-1 (3 Nils) grawn 4) it rain 1997. Anyas & 3 At Nile 6-1 (3 Nils) grawn 4) it rain 1997. Anyas & 3 At Nile 6-1 (3 Nils) grawn 4) it rain 1997. Anyas & 1997 Floraz, who spens the Silver Pairranch Colcurs of Peter Wirtfield, is an Arazz half-formither to many winners and the chalged at Leicoster and Donicaster. The ground was much faster for those wins than it will be have but his round atops suggests he'll have no trouble with the soft wins than it will be have but his round atops suggests he'll have no trouble with the soft close Up whose Pontefrast maden indictory was on good to limit, coped well testing conditions to rotion up at Haydoch mastering previous scorer and market leader Grieeway a head the pair rine lengths clear. What Venture won a maden in the mild at Ripon to his return but will find his a lot tougher even in he will be fitter than most. Ambiguous also went in all Ripon for his third success of the year - the others at Wolvernampton and appeals much more than Visin Venture of time same weight. Selection: CLOSE Up

2.50 SREWERS FAYRE NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £20,000 added 2m 4f 110yds Penalty Value £13,900 HOH WARRIOR (7) ID 42;or & R.B. Michaelson I C Grooks 7 11 10 G Bradley HOH WARRIOR (1) 0 4204 is the steemen of the street of the steemen velicus, grey steeres
343431 THE LAND AGENT (17) (0 | Barel J Mains 7 09

BETTING: 114 Flat Top, 7-2 Headward, 4-1 Medison Cottaty, The Littre agent, 6-1 non-visition, r-1 Peace Lord 1996 of 1997 in Jacks 17-1 to fax likes S Shath 8 ran FORM GUIDE.

THE LAND AGENT kooks the part for this after returning to form at just the right time, Mich Frizgerald takes the righ and The Land Agent, a bumper winner in testing ground two years ago, was an easy winner over a trip similar to this at Accost 17 days ago. Flat Top is locking more and more like a true slayer so this race could just be run a bit too quick for him. He must be a lough customer to win at Hexham (3m 19 just five days after the elog-success from Gracorra at Chellenham (2m 5), but this is a bricker lest destance-wise especially being out of the handcap proper Medison County goes well in testing ground but has jumping isn't brillant and this is a much stronger race after the Chepstow with from Naysan Sur he does plug on so the stiff course will suit him. Peace Lord has Adrian Magure on board. This getcing has won in a much lower grade on strap courses and further rain would also court against him. Headwind hasn't had much rac-Lordings Action Maguine on poortin, this gleening has with the maintenine grade of the ac-courses and further rain would also court against him. Headwind hasn't had much rain ing and won a bad no wee with plenty in hand on the course last time. A son of Strong Gale, headwind would be no certainty to like this softer ground. Hoth Waitrior has a lot on his plate at the weights - and his latest arrives at Ayr hardly entitude confidence Selection. THE LAND AGENT

3.30 42ND WHITBREAD GOLD CUP (HANDICAP CHASE) (GRADE 3) (CLASS A) £100.000 added 3m 5f 110yds Penalty Value £60.474 52(45) GO BALLISTIC (37) (275 8 J Loddrafii J 9 Shea 9 ft 10 turquoise and silver diamonds (imiF: COOL DAWN (37) (The Hon Mess D Harding) R Afret 10 Ti 9 ...

emerald green, scartel hooped sleeves and cap \$20.52 CALL IT A DAY (12) (Mrs.) Lang D Nototon 8 to 40 myal blue, red chevrons, white sleeves, blue cap, red hoops

While, red hoop, surped steeres, while cap U61779 HILLWALK [21] (M.L. Stone) R Curts 12 10 0.

Minenum weight 10st. The handicap weights. Aerdwolf 9st 11sb. Centron Sont 9st 11lb. Tell The Mipper 9st 95; Hillwalt 9st 51b, Winter Belle 6st 7tb.
BETTING: 9-2 Cool Dewn, 5-1 Carboo Gold, 8-1 Cell is A Day, Carole's Crusades, 9-1 Bedipe,
11-1 Done Semourai, 12-1 Tell The Mipper, 14-1 Ten Thyne, Lively Kright, 18-1 Court Melody, 181 Kamilazze, Semileo, 22-1 Scotton Banko, St mellion Felmeny, 25-1 Ge Belligtic, 30-1 others
1997: Harvet Lad 8 10 0 Mr R Nuttal 14-1 (6 Airen 9 can
1998: Harvet Lad 8 10 0 Mr R Nuttal 14-1 (6 Airen 9 can
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1998: Harvet Lad 8 10 0 Mr R Nuttal 14-1 (6 Airen

I Kamikaze, Samisa, 22-1 Seatton Banks, St mellion Ferrary, 25-1 Ge Ballistic, 30-1 others 1997: Harwell Lad 8 10 of Mr Rivittal M-1 (Fi Alber) 9 ran FORIM GUIDE.

The Nicholson-Maguine learn, back on cloud one after Baronet's win last Setunday, can take this sub-standard Whitthreed with CALL IT A DAY, who ran a stormer at the weights over the course and distance when second to felm Of Praise in January Call if A Day also went well on his latest stant when third, humpling that 12b, to Bobbys in the Irish National as Fauryhouse. His Ultroster ellori in February was another sound effort when bezarn a length by Ottows when gwing away a stone. Kamikaze was clear when departing his out in the Ultroster race and his latest two starts have been over trips that seemed too far for him. Tell The Nilpper, who made mistakes when fourth to Unquided Missile at the Chetterham Festival, was orly five lengths behind Call it A Day at Reinyhouse and wouldn't be out of it loday on 4lb worse terms. Cariboo Gold, who was beaten at 4-1 on at Doncaster last season, has been the punt during the week. He won plently of races after that lapse and has a feather weight after his latest second to in Truth in the Kim Mus. But the could just be more at home conceding weight to interior mass. Cool Daswin would be a cracking bed if the ground week a bit fassa. The Chettenham Gold Cup winner is only 5th higher compared to the Ascot win from Orienel Lad in January so his chance looks pretty good even allowing for the unsuitable surface. Europe double a hear would not seem to be a the Sassa of the big question, but he did firish third in the Hennessy Gold Cup and this shorter trip after Air could be a help. Samilee was a long spirit as Baronet. He hing fire when assend the big question, but he did firish third in the Hennessy Gold Cup and this shorter trip after Air could be a help. Samilee was a long way behind Eudop at Ayr after his the din the National. This softer ground will tevour him and hes interestingly now bried in a visor. Dom Samourali

4.10 THRESHER CLASSIC TRIAL (GROUP 3) (CLASS A) £60,000 3YO 1m 2f Penalty Value £40,707

needs to improve a lot if he is to trouble the selection.

4.45 MARRIOTT HOTELS GORDON RICHARDS STAKES (GROUP 3) (CLASS A) £30,000 added 1m 2f Penalty Value £19,200

L Cummins (5) B

FORM GUIDE

GARUDA gams a narrow vote over flyedian and Apprehension while Michael Stoutee French acquisition Nicole Phanty, unbeaten in two stains in her native country, add to the interest on her British debut. Riyadian won the Jookey Carb Stakes at Nermanket on the single start of 1996 and had only two races in 1997, again geing in first time up - as Hamilton - and firsthing an eight-length thrid (of lour) to Helssian in the Grand Prix de Sant-Coud as Seint-Goud in June. With his ability to go well fresh, the 300-day absence might not matter too much. Even so, Garuda looked booked for further success after he had stormed to a Losted Kempton (soft) victory at Easter and he has more improvement in him than the so-year-oot Physician. Apprehension got home by a neck from yesterday's Group Two winner Almushtarak in the Earl of Sefton at Newmanket (soft) on his reappearance. Germano didn't run a bad ruce last year, winning at Newmanket and Goodwood (Lissa), findring runner-up three times and winding up with a creditable fourth behad Oevil River Peak in a Group Three race in Germany. He will not be far zwey this time, elter.

5.15 PIZZA HUT HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m Penalty Value £2,916

BETTING: 5-2 Cool As A Cocumber, 7-2 Row Man Mood, 12-1 Who's To Say, 14-1 others

This event, ongreally the Alderminister Crimes and transferred from yesterday's abandoned Warwick meeting, can go to COOL AS A CUCUMBER. A progressive type, he could still be a little way ahead of the handicapper. The selection has a bit more on his plate after beating Shinnia. Hills three and a half lengths at Hereford last time, but he was showing the benefit of his confidence-booster in a wealdah maden at Newton Abbot, where his jumping was a joy to watch. Rovester also jumped well when beating Winspit and co at Wincantion last time and, atthough he ran out at the eighth in a fauntion chase in December and had a spin over hundles afterwards, he has not done much wrong since. Parliamentarism has been in reasonable form this season, but Danties Cavalier had no trouble pulling away from him over course and distance last time. Man Mood is a index outsomer who has had plenty of chances and preference is for Northern Saddler, who showed signs of coming back to sometime flet his best when second to Planning Minace lener at the end of last month. He has non unplaced since, but has failen to an attractive ment. Selection: COOL AS A CUCUMBER FORM GUIDE

5.45 BEEFEATER RESTAURANT NOVICE CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added (CLASS C) 3m

BETTING: 6-4 Aller Moot, 4-1 Calm Down, 9-2 Torduff Express, 6-1 Berytine Star, 7-1 Grange Court, 16-1 Queff, 25-1 Queff, 25-1

FORM GUIDE

Cool Dawn's stablemate ALLER MOOR, who jumped ties a buck to beat two modest revals with ease at Wincanton after the success from Hawaian Youth and Gither late in a better race on the same course, looks best for this. Torduff Express, that in the Chelterham four-miles and a 12-length second to Kendal Cayalist on the same course, should reish the test, while Lingfield and Warwick winner Celm Down, who made jumping enne, gets the chance to show his worth over this long

6.15 PIZZA HUT MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £5,000 added 2YO 51 Penalty Value £3,485 BETTRIC: 2-1 Mujedene, 11-4 Sonier Seme, 5-1 Timberhill. 11-2 Bartholomer. 7-1 Mon

10-1 A La Perruche 1997 Smooth Saing 8 n J Fortune 20-1 (K McAultite) drawn (3) 10 ran FORM GUIDE The experienced par, Bartholomew and Timberhill were both well beaten on their de-

The expensions part, Bartonomew and Transmiss were bost well bleast on their buts at Kempton and Doncester respectively and this can go to Brian Meethant debutant MUJADENE. Described by his handler as a bargain buy at 30,000gms and an eye-catching sort who has a great way with him, the cot should be able to hip along it bit being by Mujedi out of a Mummy's Pet mare. And Kieren Fallon rides. Suntay Sanses from a cood without-auditional mans.

Selection: MUJADENE.

BEEFEATER RESTAURANT RATED HANDICAP (CLASS B) £12,000 added 3YO 5f Penalty Value £7,276

Manimum weight: 8st 4fb True hendscap weight: Emperor Naheem 8st 2fb.

BETTING: 7-2 Emperor Naheem, 4-1 Night Shot, 6-1 Robin Goodleibre, 7-1 Supreme Angel, 8-1
Manimu Moss, Hill Magic, 10-1 Eastern Purple, 12-1 others
1997 Hattab 8 t2 R Hughes 16-1 (P Walwyn) drawn (TI) 10 ran

Mariee Rasen HYPERION 2.10 Golden Lily 2.40 Cinnamon Stick 3.10 Prim-

itive Streak 3.45 Super Rapier 4.20 Dulas Bay 4.55 Rustic Air 5.30 Bora Bora 6.00 Tricky Trevor GOING: Hurdles course - Good to Soft (Soft in places); Chases - Soft (Good to Soft in back straight) Prohit-hand sharp undulating circuit. Fun-in of one furions SH Hight-hand sharp fundulating circuit, Hurshi of one funding @ Course is E of town on A-631 Station 1m. ADMISSION: Cub 10; Tattersalls £9 (OAP Jubilee Club half price). Shiver Ring £5 (Jubilee OAPs half price). CAR PARK: pcinc areas £2, rest free @ LEADING TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley 23 100 (23%). J FftzGerald 14-91 (54%). Miss H Knight 13-38 (342%). K Balley 13-44 (235%).

© LEADING JOCKEYS: A S Smith 20-141 (142%) P Niven 19-112 (17%) R Johnson 14-68 (206%) R Garmay 19-110 (148%) © FAVOURITES: 211-611 (345%) BLINXERED FIRST TIME: Guy's Gamble (2:0), Bridlington Bay & elkander (210), Super Tsar (5.30) Father Eddle (visored, 210).

2.10 APRIL SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS G) £2,000 added 2m 1f 110yds

5-503 OLD GOLD N TAN (10) J A Poston 5 to 10 - Mr Edgar Byrne (7) 50002 GOLDEN LILY (66) > 9 ore 5 10 5 R Thorston 5/250 RINKY (11) 5 tomos 5/250 E 550012 GOLDEN ULY (36) × 9 ale 5 10 5 3 03500 FUNKY (11) F Jorgan 5 10 7 1 44660 THE TIG (12) F Weathcase 4 10 6 .

Minutum weight 10:1, True handicap weight Elaid 9st 135 BETTING: 7-2 Caracol, 5-1 Sharp Coremand, 11-2 Cinnamon Stick, 6-1 Dawn Mission, Mennsakib Otesteem, 7-1 Thinty Below, Cambo, 14-1 others

5050 ARCHE-T (28) P Beaumont 5 10 S.

12 3PP GUYS GAMBLE (12) J Wharton 5 10.4 L Cummins (5) B – 12 declared – BETTING: 3-1 Golden Lily, 9-2 Members Wellcome, 7-1 Nicola's Princess. B-1 Mag is Memony, American Sun, Tudor Falcon, Old Gold N Ten, 14-1 others

2.40 DAFFODIL HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) \$2,600 added 2m 5f 110yds

23442P SHARP COMMAND (P21) (D) P Socies 5 12 0 ... M Dunna (5)
PPOTOP DAWM MISSION (12) (CD) T Easterby 6 11 2 ... R Gardby B 22294 CARACOL (22) (ER) J Needle 9 16 ... T Dascombe 040321 CINNAMON STICK (26) M Sowersby 5 11 3 ... A S Smith

4 04(32) CINNAMON STICK (25) M Sowersty 5 ft 3. ... A S Smith 5 30(22) MEMSAHB OFESTEEM (12) S Gclings 7 ft 2... D Gallagher 6 JP5400 BE BRAVE (12) T Eiterrigtor 8 10 8 ... L Carmins (5) B 7 000633 THIRTY SELOW (12) (10) M Creptina 9 10 7 ... W Worthington 8 0 P639 MARCHWOOD (25) N Chamberlain 11 10 6 ... S Taylor (3) 9 02330 CAMBIO (105A) (38) (CD) M Earks 12 10 5 ... R Hobson (7) 10 024-P5 SOLOMAN SPRINGS (277) Mrs V Ward 8 10 3 ... P Carberry 12 4-406 BFAAD (5) J Norton 7 10 0 ... B Gratan (5)

- 11 declared

- 8 declared -BETTING: 5-4 Primitive Streak, 3-1 Six Clerks, 7-1 Wille Warnabe, Reliander, 8-1 Newton Mist, 12-1 Hya Prim, 25-1 others

3.45 UK HYGIENE NOVICE CHASE (CLASS D) \$5,500 added 2m 4f TI FIS BOARDROOM SHUFFLE (98) (D) (BF) J Giford 7 TI 12.

BETTING: 1-4 Boardroom Shuffle, 4-1 Super Raples, 16-1 Kenzian Lad, 4.20 TULIP NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS D) £4,000 added 2m 3f 110yds

4.55 SPRING HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 2m 4f

5.30 SPRING STANDARD NH FLAT RACE (CLASS H) (DIV I) £1,500 1m Sf 110yds O BORA BORA (12) (C) N Twiston-Davies 5 11 9 ... L Suthers 17)

BELISARIO (43) (C) N Graham 4 11 5 ... R Thornion MANNEKEN P15 K Baley 5 11 4 ... Me Edgar Byrns (7) MEESON MANC D Edgy 5 11 4 ... Mer L Temple (7)

D NDRS CASH FOR FUN (A4) H Coling-dge 5 11 4 ... R Studioline (5) POWDER HOURD I Williams 5 11 4 ... E Husbard (3) MONTEL'S FRUEND K Baley 5 10 13 ... W Weshi (7) O MY DESPERADO (74) C Relatific 5 10 13 ... Mir C R Wester (7) CHADSMAY RAMK (6) MCOnt 4 11 2 ... Richem (7) 10 GEMERAL FLIGHT A turnel 4 10 2 Mer C Hais
11 D MANNA BRAVE (38) A H Havey 4 10 12 G Bases (7)
12 SUPER TSAR K Burle 4 10 12 Mer K C'Physot (7) B
13 O BASIACAN (48) G Hubberd 4 10 7 C C Honour (7)
14 LITTLE BUD Miss A M Newton-Smith 4 10 7 Mer Manifel (7) Mer Control (7)
15 Hatting C A Borra Borza, 11-4 Befsario, 5-1 Manneken Pie, Montel's Friend, 10-1 Chadwick Bank, General Paght, 16-1 My Desperado, 33-1 others

6.00 SPRING STANDARD NH FLAT RACE (CLASS H) (DIV II) £1,500 1m 5i 110yds

Selveteam cerri HYPERION 5.40 Kathryn's Pet 6.10 Bovzontoowa 6.40

Noosa Sound 7.10 Harfdecent 7.40 The Snow Burn 8.10 Orange Imp GOING: Good to Soft (Soft to places) GOING: Good to Soft ISOft is placed;

© Leth-hand undulating accurse Easy fences and long number

© Course is the SE of Lower in part of Adde and ART ADMISSION:
Pladdock to 104Pe Ed I Course Ed CAR PARK to rest thee

© LEADING TRAINERS: Mins Mindreley 13-24 (1296%) J H Johnson 21-18 (121%) G M Moore 15-122 (156%) J Wade 15-13 (165%)

© LEADING JOCKEYS: Pinven 55-131 (154%) G Lee 15-35 (142%)

N Smith 14-37 (144%) J Callagham 14-122 (13.7%)

© FAYOURITES (138-3% (184%)

BLINKERED PIRST TIME: Marcus Royale (140)

5.40 MITSUBISHI CONDITIONALS NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 2m 1f 201 KATHAYN'S PET (FIG) (I) 10% M Revelse 5 m 2 G Lee
201 ASHLEY COTTAGE (67) J A Morre 5 m 0 A K Smith (5)
202 BIROTEX BOY (35) C Sound 5 m 5 G Lee
202 BIROTEX BOY (35) C Sound 5 m 5 G Lee
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202 BIROTEX OF NIGHT EXPRESS (78) N Tochurser = 10.8 . I Jankins (3)

- 9 declared -BETTING: 11-10 Kathryn's Pet, 7-2 Zen Dancer, 13-2 Perpetual Light, 7-1 Pheasants Delight, 10-1 Drumdonna, 18-1 Birotex Boy, 25-1 others 6.10 STANLEY RACING NOVICE HANDICAP

HURDLE (E) £5,000 2m 5f 110yds

BETTING: 9-2 Water Font, Tam O'Shanker, Hurding Slane, 5-1 Northern #3estro, 7-1 Boyzontoowa, Nr Walt, 10-1 Joe Luke, 12-1 others

6.40 BUPA HOSPITAL WASHINGTON NOVICE CHASE (D) 25,000 3m 3f P-1081 NOOSA SOUND (11) (CD) L Lungo 8 ft 22. R Supple 301/87 APACHE RAIDER (12) (BP) F Marby 6 ft 8 ... P Carberry B 54175 GALEN (39) (CD) Mr 3M Reveley 7 ft 8 ... P Milyer FS-2776 The ENCRESSER (130) (CD) (C Lamb 2 ft 8 ... J Burbs 502-7 AR AGHADH ABHABE (12) Mes K Milyen 7 ft 2 ... D Parher 502-7 FRINDE RAIBBLER (14) F LORDON (14) F LORDON (14) F LORDON (15) (CD) J Dun 9 ft 2 ... S Stowy 6-236 MEADOWEUFIN (14) (C) W Reed 8 70 ft ... T Reed 6-8 declared -

- 8 declared -BETTING: 5-2 Apachs Roider. 11-4 Moosa Sound, 9-2 Kings Lane, 5-1 Galen, 8-1 The Energiset, Fenice Randder, 25-1 others

7.10 GEORGE/MCLANEY NAMING DAY HANDICAP CHASE (D) £6,000 2m 5f

7.40 MITSUBISHI MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS F) \$2,500 added 2m 5f 110yds

- 11 declared -BETTING: 7-4 The Snow Burn, 4-1 Mr Tees Components, 9-2 The Mick-letonian, 5-1 Cypness Avenue, 7-1 Nessyer, 10-1 Rinus Mejor, 20-1 others 8.10 STANLEY RACING HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) mares £3,000 2m 5f 110yds
1 2m JESSICA ONE (42) Mar M Feweley 7 2 0 ... M H Magrism (5)
2 035P2 ORANGE MP (12) J Fir.Gerald 5 n 6 ... P Carberry
3 342P3 HURST RIVER (14) F Maragn 6 n 4 ... B Harding
4 4832R AIDE MEMOIRE 26] F Johnson 9 100 ... K Johnson
- 4 declared Manumum weight 10st Time transactory weight Acid Memoir Scr 11th.
BETTING: 11-8 Orange Imp, 13-8 Jessica One, 7-2 Hurst Flyer, 14-1 Aide Memoirs

Weiger and the

HYPERION 4.50 Where's Miranda 5.20 Lovevoumillions 5.50 Avanti Express 6.20 With Impunity 6.50 Samanid 7.20 Moorland Highflyer 7.50 Latchford

Object-hand course level with long straights and easy turns
O Course is on the A443 by Prior Severn Wordester (Foregate : sustion for, ADMISSION: Members £13; Tattersalls £10; Course 2550 (04Ps 2275) CAR PARK: Free promo area parking £3.

© LEADING TRAINERS: M Pipe 42:436 (369%). D Nicholson SC CASCAL K Barley (1993) (247for P. Hobbe 22-111 (1985))

OLEADING JOCKEYS: A P. McCoy (9-17) (2876) A Maguire 30
(SA 1995) N. Williamson (29-12) (5776) R Johnson (5-94 (695))

FAVOURITES: (35) 467 (6436)

BLINKERED FIRST TIME, China Gem (750)

4.50 POWICK NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) (DIV I) \$2,900 added 3m

| 24450 CENTO (7) VS S VARANS 6 TI S | B Fedion B | 1460 25F37 HIGHLAND JACK (50) (D) A Timel 5 % % F6F0 JILL (NZ) (7) S Bookstaw 7 % 3 R Farrant X Azpuru (3) M Richards -FOCP MISTER GENEROSITY (10) C Weedon 7 to 2 033-F THE OTHER MAN (184) Mss L Booké 3 10 1 T Suddail (7)
05556 WHERE'S MIRANDA (11) G VeCour 6 10 0 W Marston 14065 PETROS GEM (23) M Editin 5 730 .. M Batchelor (5)

5.20 HENWICK NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) 22,900 added 2m

- 14 declared -BETTING: 1-3 Loveyoumálions, 7-1 Barton Green, 8-1 Kaladross. 20-1 Councilor, 25-1 Streiching, Seect Perry, Who fells Jen, 33-1 others

5.50 CITY OF WORCESTER NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m

1 DET AWANT EXPRESS (12) CEPTER 20 ... N WIREARSON B 2 0340U5 ALTHREY PILOT (17) R PALACO 7 Th 0... . S Wynne 3 57-218 BARHALE 80Y (40) (0) T Casey 6 Th 0 MA Fizgerand

6.20 TIMOTHY LEA HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS C) £7,000 added 2m 7f 110yds

- 11 declared BETTING: 7-2 Sounds Fyrie. 8-1 With Impunity. 7-1 Persons Boy.
Navysari, Flepjack Lad. 8-1 The Gopher. Coverdate Lane. 12-1 others 6.50 RON SIMS HEATING HANDICAP HUR-DLE (CLASS D) £3,750 added 2m 1.05F KINN(ESCASH (198) (CD) P Bown 5 2 0 ... W Mareton 2 (2000 NOSLE LORD (75) (D) 3 Priess 5 n 1 ... A P McCoy 1 ... A P McCoy 2 ... A P McCoy 3 ... A P McCoy 3 ... A P McCoy 3 ... A P McCoy 4 ... A P McCoy 5 ... A P McCoy 5 ... A P McCoy 5 ... A P McCoy 6 ... A P McCoy 5 ... A P McCoy 6 ... A P McC

7.50 POWICK NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS E) (DIV II) \$2,900 added 3m

Manatum weight 10st. True hardcap weight. Seven Polisio More Sel Bib, Sele To Assume Set Tib, Husbin An Bucife Ex 10b, Young Andress Bet 11lb. SETTEMS: 4-1 September Breeze, 5-1 Tappeto, Latchford, 13-2 Chine Gem, Palace Perede. Golet Moments, 8-1 Ht Mantile, 14-1 others

Punters' Guide

SANDOWN

50: The Land Agent created a good impression when showing improved form to humble those useful types Stormy Passage and Wade Road at Ascot 17 days ago. But Mick Fitzgerald's mount could well have problems conceding weight to FLAT TOP. Tony Dobbin's partner has yet to compete inst opposition as strong as this, but has the ability to continue his winning sequence.

3.30: Robert Alner is certainly aware that Cool Dawn, winner of the Gold Cup on fast ground, is leniently weighted here. He is reluctant, though, to let him participate if the going becomes testing CARIBOO GOLD, in contrast, performs best in the mud and has an outstanding chance here. Kim Bailey has been aiming this lightly raced nine-year-old at this prize all season. Call It A Day has been an under achiever for the past two seasons, but could be about to realise his potential judging by his third-place finish in the Irish National 12 days ago.

4.10: John Gosden's stable has yet to hit its stride this season, but it is still hard to see past the claims of MUHTATHIR. This roundactioned colt was runner-up to the Derby favourite Single Empire in soft ground at Longchamp in Sep-tember. Mick Kinane can be relied upon to get the best from Circus.

HYPERION'S TV TIPS

gosde

17.50

4.45; Another small turn-out, butnonetheless a laseinating contest. Apprehension defeated Aimushtarak by a neck last time and the latter won again yesterday at Sandown - so the form is rock soidi. If the turf is really testing this afternoon, however, GARUDA looks the one to be on. John Dunlop's colt romped home by nine; lengths in heavy going at Kempton on Easter Monday. The Italian Oaks winner Nicole Pharty makes her debut in this country.

5.15: Oliver Sherwood's yard has had a subdued 1998, but COOLAS A CUCUMBER has lately been flying the flag with distinction. The venues for this seven-vent-old's two recent victories have been Newton Abbot and Hereford but the extent of the superiority he showed there indicates he is ready to compete successfully at this Grade One track.

5.45: It should pay to look no forther than ALLER MOOR. Andrew Thornton's mount has proved himself a progressive steeplechaser this year and he should have too much quality for these rivals.

Ten-year-tale on the Whitbread Gold Cup 1988 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 Starting-prices: . . . 6-1 . 12-1 .9-2 .4-1 .9-2 .10-1 .25-1 .10-1 .12-1 .14-1 Whenhop weights: 11/1 100, 105 103 101 101 100 101 1110 100. 9 7 tl 9 9 10 8 9 10 8 . Profit or loss to £1 stake: Fevourities -£200 Second Fevourities -£492 ercentage of winners placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in last race: 60% hortest-oriced winners: Docklands Express (1991) 4-1 Longest-priced winners: Lishers Island (1994) 25-1 Top trainers: K Bailey - Mr Frisk (1990), Docklands Express (1991) D Berons - Topshern Bay (1992 & 1993) . Top jackeys: R Dunwoody - Topsham Bay (1992), Cache Fleur (1995)

C Swan - Ushers Island (1994), Life O! A Lord (1996)

First show Sandown — 2.50 C H L S T 52 52 114 52 21 Fet the Madacin County 7-2 7-2 7-2 103 7-2 Headward 72 41 72 41 92 The Land Agent 41 92 41 92 92 Hon Wanior 74 11-2 13-2 11-2 5-1 Peeca Lord 7-1 13-2 7-1 15-2 8-1 Each way, a greater the colds, places 1, 2 COxal HWm HL L Lecturies, S Starter, Tible Sandown — 4.45

C H L 94 94 21 21 Geroda 52 114 81 52 sion 34 103 - 52 44 92 41 51 92 Nicole Phanty 7-1 5-1 8-1 11-2 Each way, a quarter the oxids, places 1, 2 C Corat H Wim Hill L.Ladbokes, S Stanley, T Table

Carole's Consister 9-1 6-1 6-1 5-2 13-2 Extipe 10-1 9-1 9-1 9-1 9-1 Don Sanoual '2-1 8-1 13-1 12-1 12-1 Unity Knight 2-1 2-1 14-1 14-1 14-1 Court Melody 14-1 14-1 16-7 14-1 18-1 Pro Tryos 16-1 16-1 14-1 16-1 14-1 Tell The Nigger 16-1 18-1 18-1 18-1 18-1 Kanakan 18-1 18-1 14-1 15-1 : 64 184 184 51 184 St. Madion Francy 16-1 18-1 20-1 15-1 15-1 cotton Basin 25-1 25-1 25-1 25-1 25-1 Mr. Albert 3-51 24-21-21 25 trienta Gale 33-1 Z-1 Z-1 Z-1 Z-1 Serginal 50-1 40-1 50-1 50-1 40-1 Hillmank 65-1 66-1 180-1 66-1 80-1 Winter Bolle 100-1 66-1 100-1 66-1 68-1 Each year a commercial codes, places 1, 2, 3, 4

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_ Sandown — 3.30

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Longchamp - Sunday 2.10 PRIX GANAY (GROUP 1) 264,103 added 4YO 1m 2f 110yds Penalty Value 256,116

48-C1 ASTARABAD (USA) (21) (CD) (HI Aga Kiran) A De Roye-Oupre 92 ... G Mon

Results

SANDOWN 2.05: 1. PM PROPOSIN (T Cuirn) 1-2 fav; 2. Berling Giffis 5-2; 3. Mesur 9-1, 4 ran. 5, 8. U Durikop, Arundel). Rate: 14-0. Dual Fore-cast: £150. Computers Straight Forecast:

2.35: 1. THERREA (A Whelen) 11-4 fev. 2. Mr Mejica 12-1; 3. Secret Ballot 33-1, 10 ran. 1/4, 2. (B Milman, Culompton). Tota: 53:50; 51:40, 54:80, 54:70, DF: \$40:80, CSP. 52:20). Thoast: 57:90.06. Trice: 57:83:30. 3. 10: 1. ALMUSHTARAK (R Cochrane) 4-1; 2. Crystal Hearted 8-1; 3. Hendedma Ridge 13-2, 9 ran. 100-30 fay Crysson Tide (Sti), 5, 16, K Mehd, Newmarkett, Tota: 23, 15, £100 £210 £280 DF: £2210 CSF: £3181 Tide:

28680.
3.40: 1. IVOR'S FLUTTER (N Polard) 4-1 Jt tav; 2. Dovradon Star 4-1 Jt far; 3. See Freedom 11-2 8 rat. nt. 3. (D Esworth, Whitcombe). Tota: 24.70: 12.70, 12.70, 12.50. Cust Forecast - 25.70. CSF: 27.733. TrCsst: 578.81 Outsi Forecast: SETTL CSF: EYTS3. TriCast: CT881.
4.10: 1. MONDSCHEIN (Pat Endery) 5-2; Alkarita 10-1; 3. Charrotux 5-4 fax. 8 ran. 3. 1½. (J Durlop: Arundel). Total: E3.30; 1150; E3.70. Dual Forecast: £7180. CSF: E3.184.

E2364 4.40: 1. SNAP CRACKER (A Whelen) 11-1; 2. Palace Green 11-4. Liter; 3. Kingfishers Bonnat 25-1.6 ran, 11-4. Liav Double Choice (4th) 11-2. Li. M. Orlan, Wartage), Totar CCC, 2280, S180, Dual Forecast: £2040.

C370; £280, £180, Duel Forecest: £2040, CSF: £3776, \$.15: 1. THE GAY FOX (T Cuirr) 7-2 fev; 2. Mister Joison 12-1; 3. Straf's Quest 12-1; 3. OF: £4060, CSF: £4584 Tricast: £33400 Tric: £7930, Non Rumer: Nobalima: Non Strafe; Nosafra, CSF: £4580, Place 6: £3313, Place 5: £6686. CARLISLE

2.25: 1. SAMMAL (J Forune) 4-1; 2. First Musical 8-1; 3. Springs Noblequest 16-1 18 ran. 3-1 lar Sapring: Noblequest 16-1 18 ran. 3-1 lar Sapring: Nb J Glover Work-sop). Tolie: 5790; 530, 2510; 5300. DF; 52820. CSF: 54271. This: 520100 - part mon. Pool of 5254355 carned forward to Sandown 3.30 of £254.85 cames named Winston) 3-163y.
2.55: 1. HIGH PREMIUM (R Winston) 3-1 fay: 2. Allinson's Mate 6-1; 3. Monton's Choice 8-1, 12 ran. 4, 11/s. (R Fahey Mal-ton) Tota: 5280: 5200, 5200, 5330. DF: 5550. CSF: 5219. Tric: 55630. Yeoman Oliv-es 12-1/withdrawn not under orders. Rule 4 applies to board prices only, deduct 5p in the account.

applies to proof prices only, desout op at the pound.

3.30: 1. CELESTIAL WELCOME (A Cui-hane) 11-4 lar, 2. Castle Friend 8-1; 3. Riv-er Beat 6-1 16 ran. Y. 7. (Aut M Reveley, Salbum), Rote 6400; CIEO, 2150, 2150, 2170. DF: 22000 CSF: 52441 Woast 512395, Tho: rotes.

259.0 4.00: 1. NIGHT OF GLASS (K Darley) 3-1 fev; 2. Gymerak Premiere 8-1; 3. High Spirits 14-1.12 ran. 1/r. /k. U L Eyre, Thirsk, Tette 530: 521, 5270, 5450 Dust Forecast; 5500 CSF: 525.78. Titoast; \$277.27. Tito: \$1380. \$\text{\$\frac{1}{3}\$0. 4.30; 1. \$\text{STRACHIN (R Phench) 5-1; 2.} \\
\text{North Office Border 10-1; 3. Worth The Elfort 16-1, 14 ran. 2-1 fav Madrum, 2, 1 (L)
\text{Cumani, Newmarkell, Toke: \$\text{\$\frac{1}{3}\$} \text{\$\frac{1}{3}\$} \ 5.05: 1. BIRCHWOOD SUN (J Wasver) 8-1; 2. Mustang 16-1; 3. Skyers Flyer 20-1. 20 ran. 5-1 fav Unshaken (5th). sht hd, 1/4.

PERTH

2.15: 1. LA BRIGANTINE (Br C Bonner) 5-1; 2. Woodfield Gale 9-2 far; 3. Hand-some Anthony 5-1 13 ran, 5, 6; R Buck-forecast: 52-0; 52-30, 52-30, Doal Forecast: 52-20, Computer Straight Forecast: 523-47, Thio: £19.90, Non Runners: Camden Moon, Katsar. 2.45: 1. RUBER (G Lee) 8-1; 2. Hall-2.45: 1. RUBER (G Lee) 8-1; 2. Italielectris 9-2; 3. Monkey Wearch 7-1 11 rais.
7-2 fax Crabbits Price 14th) 7. 5. 19 Thomson), Tote: £8.70; £190, £2.80, £190, £7.
£20.40, £5F; £8th, Tricast; £2.86, £190, £7.
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Gosden warns against ignoring Maktoum signal

that the Maktoum family, now synonymous with absurd opulence, inhabited the Dubai desert. In just a few weeks time, their actions may send British racing on the same journey in reverse.

It is now believed that if some positive signal is not transmitted when £29m of Levy prize-money is dispersed in lune the Channel ports will be gridlocked not by French trucks but by horseboxes transporting Arab horses out of Britain.

Britain's stubbornly poor levels of reward is at an end, "I think they feel there has been a presumptuousness about British racing towards them," John Gosden, Sheikh Mohammed's main trainer, says. "That Greenwich Mean Time runs right up the middle of Newmarket High Street and the straight mile at Ascot; that this is the centre of the world.

"The Maktoums are certainly not of that view. The idea that they need to come here because we are the place to race is no longer held by them. They very much enjoy the racing. here, they like the different courses, but that sentimental side does not outweigh the fact that the world is a bigger stage and if Britain cannot compete on that stage financially they will, unfortunately, be forced to move their assets elsewhere.

'They will make their decision with an international mind. Their horses - which are commodities - will be placed in the best country from a financial point of view even if it does not the process is speeding up to an give them as much fulfilment.

There is a great sense that if things don't change then they will be left with no choice. But at least they've had the decency to give everyone some subtle warnings through the Nineties and then stronger warnings Sheikh Mohammed's principal trainer tells Richard Edmondson why he believes that Dubai's rulers are prepared to strike camp

number of horses "

already played out in his mind.

"All this doesn't make me feel

personally twitchy at all be-

cause things change all the

time," he says. "Nothing is for-

ever in life. Nothing stays the

that's it. I'm a big boy and I can

land, such is their physical in-

and the vast Dalham Hall Stud,

both in Newmarket. This, how-

ever, ignores another historical

nomadic stock, men whose

view of property could not be

further removed from an Eng-

lishman and his castle. There

are few personal adornments

about the family's British

homes because for them they

hold no great sentimental at-

tachment. The buildings may be

grand and expensive, but for the

Maktoums the studs, stables

fancy encampments, with the

of a monolith was evidenced by

the recent sale of the Racing Post

to Mirror Group Newspapers.

"The speed of that was chilling,"

Sheikh Mohammed's infatua-

tion has switched to his home-

land. The tracks at Nad Al

Sheba and Jebel Ali have been

developed, the Dubai World

Cup and Godolphin opera-

Since the onset of the 1990s,

Gosden says.

That they can swiftly dispose

The Maktoums are of

ride the punches.

For many years the current come but they didn't. Now, mood of dissatisfaction between the four brothers and British racing was unthinkable. The Maktoums enjoyed the variety and rich tradition of the sport of kings and considered ownership in these islands almost as historical gratitude. When Britain expansionism After more than 20 years of reached the Persian Gulf in the ownership in this land, the late 19th century, Dubai be-Maktoums' acceptance of came a protectorate of visitors who kept the Turks and other acquisitive neighbours at bay. This influence waned only at the beginning of the 1970s, the decade after liquid gold started spurting from the Emirates

> By the early 1990s, however, the Maktoums clearly felt the debt had been repaid in full. Their great herds of horses dominated the landscape, though they were scratching round for little more than pocket money in prizes.

Sheikh Mohammed first voiced the family's disapproval of the status quo in an edition of Panorama in 1991. Sheikh Hamdan followed that with similar observations in the Gulf News that were relayed to Britain, and then Sheikh Maktoum, the eldest sibling, again produced the family line in a Gimcrack speech. Sheikh and houses in Britain are just Mohammed's further use of that forum in December and recent announcement of his Godolphiu operation's move to France are evidence that imminent climax.

"What has happened is a purely logical progression," to see any histrionics, but there will be a continuous rationalisation of interests in Britain.

"They have heard for a long recently. If they are not heeded, time that prize-money would get very soon we will deserve what better but it just staggers along. They had hoped changes would

signpost moment was when ammarra, who had won the Derby and just about everything else in 1995, was sold to the Japanese for £30m. Until then Sheikh Mohammed had been considered purely a purchaser of horses.

born of frustration, they've said they can't carry on with this "The focus now is very much Dubai and has been so for five If that number does diminish years," Gosden says. "Sheikh Mohammed looks at Dubai as then Gosden will almost certainly be one of the principal having no frontiers and he can victims. It is a scenario he has race anywhere in the world.

"He's very interested in the globalisation of racing. He's got mares and a stallion in Japan and while he's not allowed to race there he's quietly working at it. That will open up in the end.

same. If things change here then "He'll keep his breeding operation, I'm sure, in Ireland One theory is that the Makand America, and to a degree toums will never desert this here, but I wouldn't be surprised to see the stallions start transvestment over here, including ferring to Ireland for the tax Gosden's Stanley House stables exemptions.

> Racing survived before the Maktoums and will do so again, even if the entire caravan leaves Blighty. Fellow owners might well be quite pleased to see them go and the big bookmakers would be ambivalent: they care less about the quality of racing than the quantity.

Group racing would certainly never be the same again though without Hamdan's increasingly complex Arabian names fighting out with his brother's personal maroon and white livery on one side and the Godolphin Royal blue on the other. Such a doomsday may soon be upon us.

"In our wonderfully British way we've just assumed that everyone is just very happy to be around us," Gosden says. "We still think we're the greatest while there are other peoples of the world who are happy to tell us otherwise.

The Maktoums will race here as long as the haemorrhage of ownership can be reduced. That can't be done at a sustainable level at the moment. They can go elsewhere and get tions inaugurated. Another a better return."



John Gosden: 'Nothing is forever in life. I'm a big boy and I can ride the punches'

Headwind to make light of Sandown mud Brooks and

By Richard Edmondson

COMPLICATED permutations are always a part of Saturday racing, though this week's atrocious weather ensures it is the races themselves rather than speculation on them that is causing great intricacy.

Leicester and Ripon have already fallen victim to El Niño, Flat races would originally have but the tricky stuff occurs at either four, seven or nine races chase, but the National Hunt this afternoon. Or, perhaps, representation has been swollen none at all. The contests most under

threat on the mixed card are the two encounters over five furlongs, which have been moved separate sprint track needs only the Everglades.

Go Ballistic: Will run only if the

Flat course will be staged. They include a Classic Trial which 12 months ago launched Benny The Dip and Silver Patriarch to fill the forecast in the Derby. The elements rather than the quality of the field suggest there may be another launching today.

The abandonment of all the left just the Whitbread Gold Sandown, where they will stage Cup and a novice handicap by the transfer of a chase from yesterday's abandoned card at Warwick and a new three-mile novice chase.

The four chases are almost to the bottom of the card. That certain to go ahead despite the sight of television weathermen a little more rainfall to resemble dispersing dark shapes across their maps vesterday evening. There is greater expectation The prediction was for a further

known until Andrew Cooper, the clerk of the course, conducts his inspection at 7.45am.

Robert Amer supplied the first and second in the Whitbread Gold Cup last year and,

RICHARD EDMONDSON NAP: Headwind (Sandown) NB: St Mellion Fairway (Sandown 3.30)

before the monsoons came, his sole problem seemed to be composing a victory speech of originality.

Cool Dawn, his Cheltenham Gold Cup winner, gets in here with an extraordinarily kind Ballistic, who was half the tenham Festival has attracted

overnight, though the exact Blue Riband, now has to coneffect of the weather will not be cede 2lb. Cool Dawn, though, is primarily a good-ground performer and will not run at all in the event of "significant rain".

> "I wouldn't want to mislead anyone," Alner said yesterday. "We very much want to run, but if the conditions change - and heavy rain is forecast - he wouldn't run and that would be it for the season,"

Four survivors from last weekend's Scottish National at Ayr drop their bags in Surrey, including the remarkable Samlee, who was also third in the Grand National. He is beginning to discover how Hercules felt.

Cariboo Gold, whose first sign of form this season came when runner-up to In Truth in the weight. For example, Go Kim Muir Chase at the Chel-

that the three races on the main 10mm of rain to visit Esher Cotswolds behind him in the support this week, while a rather won over this terrain last pleasant consolation winner month. It may be difficult to get would be Lively Knight. His jockey, Leighton Aspell, was told by Inspector Knacker on Thursday that he was no longer

part of race-fixing enquiries. Recompense is also due to St Mellion Fairway (next best 3.30). He too was among the few that limped back from the Aintree trenches. He has been given more time to recover than Samlee and, as he is proven in this marmalade going.

could provide the value option. The preceding novice handicap chase is notable in that all six contestants won the last time they started. Hoh Warrior qualifies on a technicality as he refused to race at Ayr last week.

Josh Gifford's HEADWIND (nap 2.50) looked more seasoned than a novice when he

past him at any stage. For all Sandown's watery

charms, the highlight of the weekend will come in the relatively sparsely populated environs of Longchamp tomorrow afternoon. The Prix Ganay signals the return of a colt who has almost completed his membership form to join the exclusive club inhabited by the likes of Shergar and Nijinsky.

Peintre Celebre was a quite awesome athlete at this Parisian venue in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe last autumn and there will be great anticipation to see how he has emerged from hibernation. The bulletins from Chantilly suggest he will make a winning reappearance against five rivals tomorrow even if he is chained to the starting stalls.

the Irish National at Fairyhouse

Billwalk: May as well stay at

Winter Belle: I would not want

to pay the travelling expenses.

Conclusion: Carole's Crusader

is unproven over this trip but

has suggested that he will get

every yard of it. Cariboo Gold

can also give a good account

based on his Festival form but

CALL IT A DAY may have the

measure of them both. He

on Easter Monday.

Guest leave scene early

By Richard Edmondson

Suny Bay to a dramatic second place in the Grand National. Charlie Brooks has given up training. The Old Etonian vesterday announced that he is no longer to be at the helm of the Upper Lambourn yard he has served since the days of Fred Winter. He has resigned his position with Uplands Bloodstock, the owners of the stable. "Charlie Brooks has an-

nounced today that after a long association with Uplands he has decided to leave the stables at the end of the season," the sports agency IMG said in a statement. "He will be considering other options but will not be making any further comment at the present time."

This shock was compounded when the loquacious Brooks was uncharacteristically reticent in his column in the London Evening Standard "I won't be expanding on the statement," he told his readers.

Brooks has been a fixture at Uplands since the 1980s, when he acted as assistant to the celebrated Winter. He took charge of the yard in 1989, the year after supervising Celtic

Shot's Champion Hurdle win. The trainer regularly bemoaned the cost of running the yard, but his problems seemed solved four years ago when Andrew Cohen, of the Betterware firm, bought Uplands but kept Brooks in charge. Good horses such as Zetas Lad and Very Very Ordinary arrived as part of the package.

It was Suny Bay, one of 17 horses Brooks trained for Cohen, who was to become the stable star. He was also runnerup in the National last season and earlier this campaign collected the Hennessy Gold Cup. Charlie has resigned from the trainer," Cohen said. "If you know anyone send him this way.

about why this has bappened THREE weeks after saddling but I understand Charlie wants to pursue other things. I've made a significant investment in Uplands and my plans are undiminished. I want to ensure Uplands is one of the best National Hunt stables in the country. My commitment

> "We have a very good team and over 60 horses in training and I intend to find the right leadership to take us forward. I had no complaints about Charlie, otherwise I would have done something about it. Any successor would have to have a successful background, a proven performance and be committed to training in the modern way." Richard Guest too appears as

> though he will be lost to the sport in his present capacity following the jockey's confirmation that his days in the weighing room are over. Guest threw in his licence at Perth on Thursday after he was found in breach of the nontriers' rule for the third time this season. An evening's contemplation failed to mellow him.

> "This is the saddest day of my life getting up this morning with the prospect of never riding ugain," he said. "But I'm not going to change my mind.

> "I've been forced to give up because of a silly rule. All I was trying to do was look after a horse in a bad selling hurdle. As the rules stand I can't continue to be a jockey. What they are asking me to do is completely against my principles."

Guest, who partnered Shergar on the gallops when working for Michael Stoute, saved much of his vitriol for William Numeley, a stewards' secretary, The rider believes he has been singled out for punishment by the official, though Nunneley vesterday said it was "rubbish" to suggest he had orchestrated end of the season and I need a a witch-hunt against Guest.

Women who race, main section, page 18

Call It A Day to reach successful conclusion hard race. His form looks to The former National Hunt jockey Steve

ground is good. Well down the field in the Cheltenham Gold Cup but put up a good performance to win at Wincanton previously. Could run well if conditions suit. Cool Dawn: The Gold Cup He has been out of form,

winner, but by no means a certain runner. Has obvious claims, but Gold Cup heroes do not have a good record in this race. Endine: Second in last Satur- maybe. day's Scottish National - a race that may have taken the Court Melody: Took an early

exit at Becher's in the Grand National but did not have a

Wolverhampton

HYPERION

7.00 Spring Anchor 7.30 Bongo 8.00 Noutarl

8.30 Castle Ashby Jack 9.00 Red Symphony 9.30 Runs in The Family

GOING: Standard: STALLS: 71 & 1764 - outside; rest - inside.
DRAW ADMANTAGE: High from 61 to 177 44.

© Fibrestand surface; infriend course.
© Course is SE of town on 82028, Red stateon adjoins course. ADMISSION: Outs 157; Tentercarts 156 (OAP members of Deimond Club MISSION: Outs 157; Tentercarts 156 (OAP members of Deimond Club MISSION: Outs 157; Tentercarts 1594) missions and meet CAR PARK: Free.
© LEADING 178ANEPS: R Hollinshaed 68-640 (DR%). M Johnson SS-263 (221%), J Berry 47-317 (LADW), P Evans 34-357 (95%).
© LEADING 179CHEYS: J Wester 65-289 (217%), D Holland 33-35 (217%), Deam Mickeyers 32-271 (LES), J Quinn 28-488 (84%).
© FAVOURITES: 430-2276 (223%).
BLANKERED FRIST TIME: Aurosas The Water (700), Ludere (730), Boreloid Johor (800).

7.00 SKY DIVE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) 25,000 added im 4f

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3 BEDERBOGE (USA) (372) 1 Gordon 4.9 TO G Hand 2

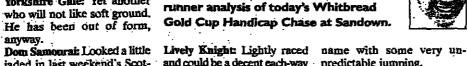
have tailed off. Yorkshire Gale: Yet another who will not like soft ground.

jaded in last weekend's Scot- and could be a decent each-way tish National. Time for a rest,

third in the Irish National and could figure prominently again if he is fit and well.

Scotton Banks: Cannot win on this season's form.

Smith Eccles (right) gives a runner-by runner analysis of today's Whitbread Gold Cup Handicap Chase at Sandown.



bet at a big price. Celtic Abbey: Another also-ran

Call It A Day: Ran well to be as he prefers better ground. Fine Thyne: Needs decent ground to be able to put his best foot forward and may also lack the class. Kamikaze: Lives up to his

RED DEVIL APPRENTICE CLAIMING

7 PVORMAN T EN 3 8 7 PP (18) (BF) P Cob 3 8 7 C Rotter 6

- 8 declared BETTING: 4-6 Spring Anchor, 8-4 Redbridge, 25-1 The Bal. Bobby Switt,
What The Devil, 33-1 others

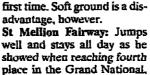
7.30 RED DEVIL ATTREE (CLASS G) £2,500 1m 100yds

- 15 december -BETTING: 7-4 Bentico, 5-2 Bungo, 8-1 Over The Moon, Rouge, 10-1 Lan-drium, 14-1 Cheerful Groom, 10-1 Luders, 20-1 others

RYORIANI TERS 87_

predictable jumping.

Samlee: Has had some hard races, including his third in the National at Aintree, but will get round in his own time. Carole's Crusader: Well backed this week and could run a big race at the weights, de-



but just lacks that touch of Aardwolf: Will be hard pressed to reach the frame. Cariboo Gold: Has a definite chance after running well at the

Cheltenham Festival but needs decent ground. Tell The Nipper: The sole Irish

spite tackling the trip for the raider who had a hard race in

loves Sandown and will be hard to beat if the exertions of his third in the Irish National have not taken their toll.

9.00 REGIMENT SELLING STAKES (CLASS G) £2,500 added 2YO 5f

9.30 PARACHUTE HANDICAP (CLASS F) fillies £3,000 added 5f

8.00 FREE FALL HANDICAP (CLASS D) 12 23500 CASTLE ASHBY JACK (28) (D) P Howing 4 8 2 . S Withmarth 9 = 72 declared =

BETTING: 4-1 Milto's Double, 6-1 Shades Oi Love, Sia Garden, 7-1 Caudii
io, 8-1 Laigh Croftac, 10-1 Castle Ashby Jack, 12-1 others £5,000 added 1m 6f 166yds

2701 NOUFARS (14) (CD) R Holinshead 7 10 0 ... A McCartiny (5) 4 01/24 JASAAS (14) (CD) Mes S Witton 7 9 9 ... S Winbursto 2 V 04005 STAR RACE (14) (C) (0) M Johnston 9 8 8... J. Holland 1 (3:00) PREMIER DANCE (31) (C) D Hayon Jerse 18 81 J. A Mackey 3 S210 SEPOMIZ (166) (CD) (EF) C Cyst 4 8 1 ... T Williams 6 0000 OUR DRONEY MAGGIE (118) T Wall 4 7 10 ... N Adams 5 - 8 disclared -

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00500 Ht. RHAR-SODY (5) B Pelling 49 8 T Sprake 2
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McMillan wins South Africa recall

By Myles Hodgson

ENGLAND intend to utilise the close working relationship hetween their coach, David Lloyd. and the Pakistan all-rounder, Wasim Alaram, in an attempt to glean inside knowledge on the South African party announced yesterday for this summer's

The South Africans named a 17-man party for this summer's tour to England, which comprises a five-Test series, a three-match Texaco Trophy series and a triangular tournament against the hosts and the world champions, Sri Lanka,

Although England have detailed video and statistical information to hand about all

Trafford to discover Wasim's strengths and weaknesses.

Wasim arrives to take up his adept in Test cricket. post as Lancushire captain this weekend after playing for Pakistan in a triangular tournament against South Africa and Sri Lanka and England are keen to tap into his knowledge. David's preparation is al-

he'll be going to watch South Africa at the first opportunity," David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, said.

"I'm sure he will also be pooling as much information as possible about them and, with Wasim having played against them recently. I'm sure he will be talking to him as well as many - ty cricket.

their Test opponents, Lloyd is other people. This summer presure to pay an early visit to Old sents an immense challenge to us because they have shown rethoughts on South Africa's cently how good they are at the one-day game by annihilating Pakistan and they are very

"It is important we learn the lessons from our time in the West Indies. The basic recipe for winning doesn't change no matter who you are playing and what time of year you play and ways very thorough and I'm sure that is something we have to bear in mind."

The South African squad includes several players already familiar to English audiences. Six of the party - the captain Hansie Cronje, Jacques Kallis, Daryll Cullinan. Brian McMillan, Shaun Pollock and Allan Donald - have all played coun-

biggest surprise in the party, having been dropped this season after disappointing tours to Pakistan and Australia. At 34, the big-hearted all-rounder's international career had

seemed over. Peter Pollock, the South Africans' convener of selectors, stressed: "Mac had a rough season but is a good player and South Africa still have a vulnerability factor in our batting. He has a good record in England and we have picked him mainly as a batsman and a slip

Mornaniau Hayward, the Eastern Province fast bowler, one of six pace men in the party, is the only uncapped player in the squad. The party in-

represent South Africa in a cause he's experienced playing Test - and the mixed-race swing there already with Middlesex bowler. Roger Telemachus from Boland

But it is the extensive experience of English conditions within the squad which will worry the England selectors most and perhaps give South Africa a slight advantage for the opening Test at Edgbaston on

Their experience of English conditions and pitches has got to be to their advantage," Graveney said.

Our young players do not get the chance to go and discover what it is like playing in India or West Indies and I'm sure that has to belp them.

"Jacques Kallis, for instance, will not be at all fazed at

McMillan is perhaps the Ntini - the first black player to having to walk out at Lord's belast season and Allan Donald we

Graveney added: "Most of the players we expected are there and I'm slightly surprised some of the one-day specialists. like Steve Elworthy haven't been included, but it is still a very strong squad.

Donald and Pollock speak for themselves and we know a lot about them, but it will be interesting to see how Paul Adams has developed since we last saw him."

SOUTH AFRICAN SQUAD (to tour England, starting 17 May): W J Cron-je (captain), G Kirsten, A M Bacher, G F J Liebenberg, J H Kalls, D J Culinan, B M McMilan, J N Phodes, M Y Boucher,

know all about."

he has put serious injury behind him by taking charge in the second round of the Spanish Open in Barcelona yesterday. The Australian, who also

led the Cannes Open last week, had an eight-under-par 64 - just one stroke off the course-record to move into a three-stroke lead on 14-under-par 130. The 26-year-old from Melcourne led one of the three first-

round leaders. Jay Townsend of America, and in-form Briton Phillip Price, second last week in Cannes. Another overnight frontunner, Jose Carriles of Spain, justice." his compatriot Miguel Jimenez. Japan's Katsuyoshi Tomori,

Frenchman Jean Van de Velde, and England's Mark James. the defending champion, were a further stroke back. Allenby took eight birdies, five in his last six holes, for his

lead and, after fading badly last week in Cannes, the Australian had reason to believe he could stay in front. "After slipping up last week... I've been tinkering with my

clubs a bit," said Allenby, who captured third place on the European money-list in 1996 a car accident, stalling his career in early 1997.

"I've got the same heads but ve changed the shafts for stiffer ones throughout the bag. apart from my three-wood and Asian tour. L-wedge."

"It obviously worked because I've never had two rounds like this, 66 and 64, in my life, and I had birdie chances at every hole because I hit all 18

looking good 'sallenby' in Spain

"I missed four putts inside eight feet, either through live out or just missed in spain."

Amouncing himself fully fit again', Allenby aims to be in the top two of the European order of merit by the end of the May European PGA Championship which will earn him a place in the US Open. He is already in the British Open and the US PGA Championship later this

"I missed playing in the US Masters this year." added Allenby, "and I want to play in all four majors next year. When I went to Augusta for the first time last year I was still nowhere near fit and couldn't do myself

"I'm back on track after working hard on my fitness, have been since last July, but it's taken a bit longer to get myself back into shape mentally.

The other overnight leader, Australia's Greg Chaimets, had not started by the time his fellow-countryman came in and had six strokes to make up.

The cut-off was expected to be a low one, and Spain's Severiano Ballesteros faced an antious afternoon to discover if he had made it to the weekend after posting a 71 for 140.

In Tsukuba, Japan, Frankie when he broke his sternum in Minoza and Shigeki Maruyama shot five-under-par 66s yester day to share a one-stroke lead with Carlos Franco midway through the Kirin Open, the penultimate leg of the ten event

The second round left Maruyama and Minoza, of the Philippines, at a five-under 137, also tied with the Paraguayan Franco, who had a 67.

Edward Fryatt of England shot a 67 and shared sixth.

England impress as Smith shines

Hockey

By Bill Colwill

ENGLAND'S impressive pre-World Cup form continued in gie Souyave, said: "It was a good, the Four Nations Invitation Tournament at Springfield, against India with a 4-0 victory over Canada.

In blustery conditions, the Slough striker Jane Smith followed up her two goals against India with another brace against the Canadians, opening the scoring at a penalty corner in the

18th minute. Lucilla Wright put England further ahead from another corner four minutes before the interval. Smith struck again three minutes after the interval with Jane Sixsmith completing

the job in the 52nd minute. Today England play the unbeaten host team, who yesterday overcame India 2-0 thanks to two goals inside a minute

from Kris Fillat Hightown's Tina Cullen suf-

nament practice and has not been available for selection but is expected to play against the

The England coach, Mag-

solid performance in difficult conditions. We managed to con-Massachusetts, yesterday when trol most of the game with they followed up their 6-0 win strong individual performances from Jane Smith and Lucilla Wright." England's men also contin-

ued in rich goalscoring vein with a 6-1 win over Scotland at Milton Keynes, although to be fair the opposition was not what they will meet in Utrecht at next month's World Cup.

A hat-trick for Jason Lee, scoring his first two goals in the opening 17 minutes, set England on their way. Calum Giles and Jon Wyatt netted in the first 10 minutes of the second half and a penetrating run by Jimmy Wallis provided Duncan Woods with England's fifth in the 46th minute before Kevin Squire scored Scotland's consolation. Lee completed his hat-trick with four minutes refered a facial injury in pre tour-maining.

Calzaghe prepared to go the distance against Gimenez

Boxing

JOE CALZAGHE goes into the second defence of his World Boxing Organisation supermiddleweight title at Cardiff ice rink today knowing that his opponent has never been put on the canvas.

The Paraguayan hard man Juan Carlos Gimenez has, so far, managed to remain upright in all of his 59 fights - and the 37-year-old challenger has been around to hear the final bell in his eight defeats, two of them to Nigel Benn and Chris Eubank in previous attempts at world title glory.

No fewer than 17 of Caizaghe's 22 stoppages in 24 wins have come inside the first three rounds, so it will be pretty much a case of the irresistible force meeting the immovable

The former WBO featherweight title challenger Steve Robinson fights on the same billagainst the Frenchman Jean-Pierre Dibateza.

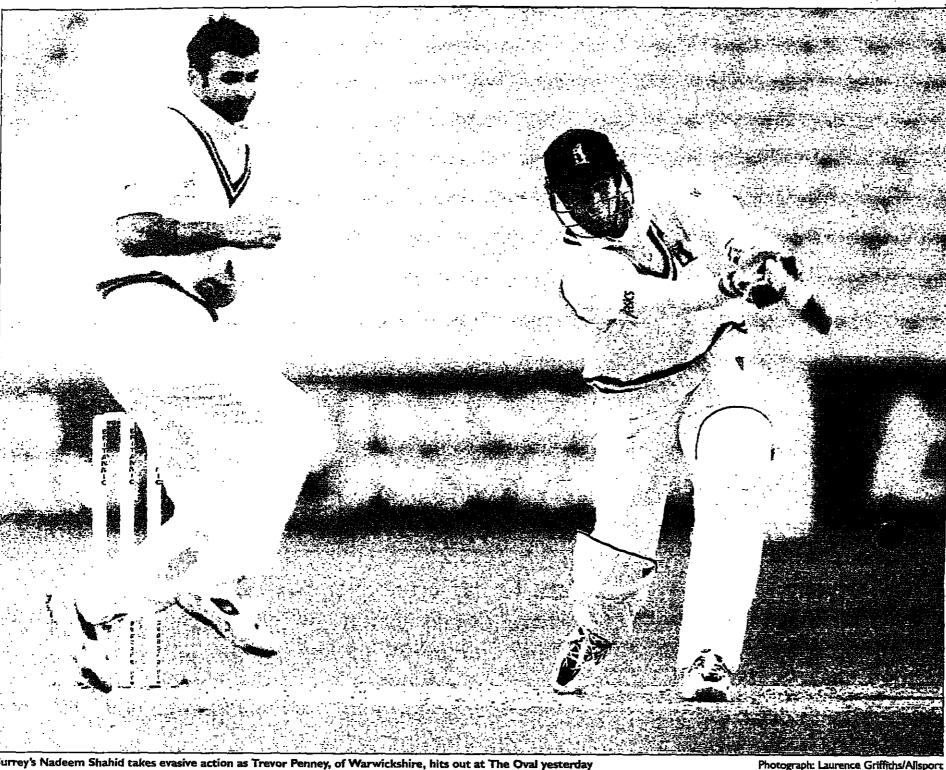
Roy Jones Junior and Vir-

gil Hill never fought when they both were champions, but they will finally meet, this time with no title at stake, in a scheduled 12-round fight tonight in the Mississippi Coliseum.

Hill (43-2 with 20 knockouts) said that two years ago, when he was World Boxing Association light heavyweight champion. Jones wanted something like five million dollars" and was offering Hill \$500,000. Hill instead took a \$2m payday in Germany and beat Henry Maske. We had a lot of difficulty

putting the fight together, but all of that is behind us now," Hill's promoter, Cedric Kush-

What finally put the bout together was a made-for-TV fight to get Jones back into the ring It also fills the date for US cable channel Home Box Office, made available when Pernell Whitaker went into drug rehabilitation, causing his challenge against WBA welterweight champion, Ike Quartey, to be cancelled.



Surrey's Nadeem Shahid takes evasive action as Trevor Penney, of Warwickshire, hits out at The Oval yesterday

out for his

new county

Adams strikes

CHRIS ADAMS hit his maiden

century for Sussex against Essex

at Chelmsford to help the

visitors reach 369 on the second

day of their rain-affected

Britannic Assurance County

Championship game yesterday.

The former Derbyshire batsman

was in imperious form as he hit

16 fours on his way his first ton

His 100 arrived off 132 balls

and it needed a combination of

the England pair of Ronnie

Irani and Nasser Hussain to

bring a halt to the innings at 135.

Durham fast-medium bowler,

claimed four early wickets as Gloucestershire slumped at

Chester-le-Street yesterday.

The openers Nick Trainor (20)

Anthony McGrath and

Steve Harmison, the

for his new county.

Unexpected success for Salisbury

By David Llewellyn

Surrey v Warwickshire

THE clinical removal of the heart of the Warwickshire first innings by the Surrey leg-spinner Ian Salisbury was as perverse, in its own way, as the climatic patterns of recent weeks, which life (and its cricket) into chaos. It is just not the done thing this South Wales and between early in the season for a spinner matches was able to pick up to do quite as well as Salisbury managed when he winkled out some key batsmen in a remarkable spell of four wickets for four

Cricket scoreboard

Britannic Assurance

Second day of lour: 11,0 lodgs,

A J Windt flow b Word

A I Dawson b Harmson ...

U W Alleyne run out ...

C U Sall not out

Extras (52 (5) nb14)

Glamorgan v Kent

Glamorgen wan toss

KENT - First Innings

T R Ward low 5 Burcher

Total (for 3, 30.1 overs) ...

County Championship

Durham v Gloucestershire

GLOUCESTERSHIRE - First Innings

To bat: J Lewis, A M Smith C A Walsh

DURHAM: JJ B Lewis, M A Roseberry,

J E Morris, N J Speak, "D C Boon, 1M P Speight P D Collingwood, N C Philips, J Wood, A Walker, S J Harmison, Umpires: R A White and P Willey

CARDIFF: Kent (Opts) have scored 76 for 3 against Glamorgan (1).

J Trambrile Soon b Harmison20 J Curtiffe o Speight b Harmison ...17 ri C Hangock Ew b Harmison5

runs in 51 balls,

runs in 11 and a half overs and that return left Salisbury saying: *The figures are ridiculous for a spinner this early in the season," Nevertheless he was pleased. It was an unexpected dividend for a great deal of hard work which Salisbury has put in

during the winter. He headed Down Under. have thrown the English way of playing for Michael Slater's club the University of New valuable hints from Shane Warne's leg-spinning guru. Terry Jenner, as well as speaking with numerous exponents.

Fall: 1-3, 2-20, 3-21, To bat: M A Eatham, M V Fleming, *1S A Marsh, B J Phillips, A P Igglesden, D W Heartha

GLAMORGAN: S P James, A W Evans, A Dale, "M P Maynard, P A Cotley, R D B Croft, G P Butcher, †A D Shaw, S D Thomas, S L Watkn, D A Cosker Umpires: H D Bird and J W Holder,

CHELMSFORD: Essex (4pts), with 10 first-innings wickets standing, are 344 runs behind Sussex (4).

"Overnight: 186 for 4)
"C J Adams c Hussam b Iran135

Bowling: Cowan 214-6-67-1; Williams 22-7-71-2: Nativer 14-3-59 2, Irani 23-7-66-2: Such 23-6-61-2, Grayson 9-4-14-1

Total (for 0, 7 overs) ______25
To bat: "P J Prichard, D D J Robinson.

N Hussam, S G Law, R C Irani, A P Grayson, 1R J Rollins, G R Napier, N F

Williams, A P Cowan, P M Such,

Umpires: R Palmer and J H Harns

Essex v Somerset

SUSSEX - First Innings

K Newell b Williams TP Moores b Such . . .

ESSEX - First Innings

In all he conceded seven picking up ideas, working out tion and knocked back off new strategies and looking at how the greats constructed an over of leg-spin. Not even Salisbury expected

to achieve a whole lot on the early-season pitches which traditionally favour the seamer but he bowled well. Keith Medlycott. the Surrey cricket manager. pinpointed one key element, Salisbury's arm is lower, "It allows him to put more revs on the ball and to bowl with more pace." said the former Surrey slow left-arm bowler.

Trevor Penney was the first to go. He appeared to be done by the flight. The ball pitched past and present of the dark art. middle and off, turned a frac-

Hampshire v Northants

SOUTHAMPTON: Northamotonshi

R R Montgomene c James b Renshaw

A J Swann not out ... -....

Total (for 1, 6.2 overs) Fall: 1-3

Opts) have scored 11 for 1 against lampshire (0).

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE - First Innings

M B Laye not out

To bat: D J G Sales, R J Bailey, "K M Curran, tO Ripley, J P Taylor, G P Swarm, D E Malcolm, F A Rose

Umpires: J W Lloyds and N T Plews.

Somerset v Nottinghamshire

TAUNTON: Somerset (Upts) have scored 65 for 4 against Notting-hamshire (1).

P D Bowler c Downsan b Bowen0
P C L Holloway c Pollard b Bowen 22
K A Parsons c Wharf b Sowen0

To bat: G D Rose, M E Trescottack. A R K Pierson. A R Caddick, K J Shine.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: P R Pollard, M.

M Noon, P J Franks. A G Wharf, M N

Umpires: T E Jesty and M J Kitchen.

Dowman, J.E.R. Gallan, "P Johnson, 7 Robinson, U Alzaal, P.A. Strang, fW

R / Turner not out

Extras (nb12)...... Total (for 4, 19.5 overs)....

Fall: 1-6, 2-6, 3-39, 4-39

Nottinghamshire won toss

SOMERSET - First Innings

stump while the baisman was Brown, who had earlier scored trying to play the ball to leg. Neil Smith failed to read the googly, Keith Piper fell, cutting, and Tim Munton, having his first innings for 18 months after a back injury, skied to mid-on.

Surrey were well on top and then to rub it it a Warwickshire old boy. Jason Ratcliffe. hammered his old mates for a goodlooking half century - his second in successive innings to put the home side well on top. Ratcliffe shared in a century opening stand with the England left-hander, Mark Butcher, and at times put his more illustrious partner in the shade.

Surrey v Warwickshire

THE OVAL Surrey (4pts), with 10 first-linnings wickets standing, are 107 runs behind Warwickshire (1).

WARWICKSHIRE - First Innings

T A Munton c Butcher b Salisbury E S H Geldins not out

Fell (cont): 5-176, 6-182, 7-182, 8-195, 9-207.

Bowling: Bicknell 21-5-55-2; Benjamin 15-5-53-0; B C Holfoake 13-1-47-1; Butcher 13-4-39-3; A J Holfoake 1-1-0-0; Sejsbury 113-7-7-4.

To bet: G P Thorpe, "A J Holfoake, A D Brown, N Shahti, B C Holfoake, tJ N Batty, 10 K Salisbury, M P Bicknet, J E Benamm.

Umptrest J C Balderstone and D R Shep-

HEADINGLEY: Yorkshire (Opts) have scored 136 for 2 against Derbyshire

Yorkshire v Derbyshire

Overright: 102 for 4)
T L Penney b Salisbury
D R Brown libw b Butcher
1K J Piper c B C Hodioake

Extras (Ib6, nb4)

SURREY - First Innings

M A Butcher not out .

Surrey won tass

He pulled a six off Dougie a fine 60. Then Ratcliffe swept Neil Smith for a second big one as the disheartened Warwickshire attack looked in vain for a way to break the stand. The elegant right-hander had reached his fifty off 65 balls. Butcher eventually passed the mark off the 112th delivery he

Butcher had something of an all-round successful day, since he had played his part with the ball, providing perfect back-up for Salisbury by taking the vital wicket of Brown in the morning to finish with figures of 3 for

39 off 13 overs.

YORKSHIRE - First Innings (Overnight: 5 for 0) A McGrath c DeFreites b Harris M P Vaughan low b Harris *D Byzas not out MiJ Wood not out . Extras (01, lb2, w6, nb22)

No play yesterday OLD TRAFFORD: Lancashire v Middle

Tomorrow's fixtures AXA League : One day; 2.0 RIVERSIDE: Durham v Gloucesters CHELMSFORD; Essex v Sussex CARDIFF: Glamorgan v Kent. SOUTHAMPTON: Northamptonshire. OLD TRAFFORD: Lancashire

LEICESTER: Leicestershire v Word TAUNTON: Somerset v Notánchamatria THE OVAL: Surrey v Warwickshire. HEADINGLEY: Yorkshire v Derbyshire.

and Rob Cunliffe (17) fell to catches by David Boon, the Durham captain, and Martin Speight respectively, before Tim Hancock (five) went legbefore and Robert Dawson was bowled for one. John Wood also claimed Tony Wright leg-before for nine.

> Michael Vaughan continued Yorkshire's good start to the season, putting on 79 for the first wicket against Derbyshire at Headingley. Vaughan was the first to fall, lbw to Andrew Harris, for 33 while McGrath had made 42 before he was caught by Phil DeFreitas, also

off Harris. Play was abandoned without a start being made for the secand successive day at Old Trafford, where Lancashire were due to meet Middlesex, and Leicester, where the hosts were to play Worcestershire.

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By John Roberts

his fate to others after playing took control after breezing abysmally in losing to the through the second set the Frenchman Fabrice Samoro in break, /the third round on Thursday. Cedia: Poline defeated his

final in order to become only the 15th, and the oldest. No. 1 since Becker's challenge, 6-7 (4-7), the ATP rankings began in 7-5, 6-1. Shirt of the day is cred-1973, was defeated as the fied to the elevision camera-quarter-finals yesterdes by man who singht Becker's wife. Richard Krajicek, the 17th Bartans wile syed and cover-Wimbledon champion 1400 by ing fire which to stifle a gasp 6-1. A recurrence of task around as her same edited husband ble hampered Korda, who still the technical that he hoped to sequently withdrew train the technical that he hoped to sequently withdrew train the technical that advanced to the quarter finals. He man that is a march in Mante Carlo, will endeavour to and their feet on the Korda, who defeated Rassan clay in Mante is next week, one

Agassi.

Korda, who defeated Rassin clay in Majorsi fiest week, one the Australian Open fatal in of the five AP. Tour events exJanuary, has since been in a po permitted by with allowing sition to overtake Sampras dure coaches on the court between ing tournaments in Antwerp, sets. Rised in and his coach, Indian Wells and key Biscayne. Tony Pickagd, have been (where Rios capitalised) is well a cathing and the idea as here. Fitness permitting the Czech may have another sip a trail admittious idea, the portunity next week in his light. Trails a substitution in Prague to be a fair years. To pending on whether Sampras is the set of the court all oble to raise his gains in addition.

said. If took me a couple of years to begin it out myself, it should be a standing rather than a ranking it really comes

A SHEEPISH Pete Sampras is down to the end of the year, guaranteed to be restored to that's when we should be talk world No 1 next Monday in the ing about the ranking. I'm going to giving one of the wers:

The anomaly occurs because the Monte Carlo Open here.

The anomaly occurs because Spaniard Carlos Moya in the an elbow injury prevented the Spaniard Carlos Moya in the semi-times today, anticipated that Korda would be a bit taght with somuch at stake.

No I ranking, and because yes terday the Czech Petr Korda when the Czech was broken was unable to take his fourth on when serving for the opening set was unable to take his fourth op - when serving for the opening set portunity of the year to climb at 5-3. The Dutchman lost his ine top.

Concentration in the next game, however, double faulting to concentration in the next game, tem, "Sampras said, having cast. lose the set from 46-0! Krajicek

The 30-year-old Korda, compatriot Santoro, 1-6, 6-2, needing to advance to Sunday's .6-4, and meets Alberto Befinal in order to become only the rasategui, who curtailed Boris



Cedric Pioline, of France, on his way to victory over his compatriot Fabrice Santoro in Monte Carlo yesterday Photograph: AP

something to get the game more popular in America,"

court, but it just doesn't seem less Rusedski requests it: "It's like tennis. I think it's just not my way," the coach from Nottingham said. "If I haven't done my job before he goes on Pickard is adamant that he the court, then I shouldn't be

his coach and pits his knowledge, talent and mental canacity against another guy.

the other. I'll have Tony on the will not set foot on the court un- employed. The game is about main. It's just a gimmick. They'll preparation. The player leaves end up with 128 players. 128 coaches, people with egos bigger than buckets. There will be more advertising on coaches

at exit sign cession, but his characteristic stone-face was all that was left of his former ability to seize a chance. In both the 13th and 14th frames he had substantial

Williams has

Davis looking

By Guy Hodgson

FIRST Stephen Hendry, now Steve Davis is on the brink. One thing is virtually certain with the second round of the Embassy World Championship barely started, and that is the modern record of seven titles is unas-Hendry went out to Jimmy

White on Thursday night and Davis will resume this morning in Sheffield teetering on the brink of joining his fellow sixtimes champion on the early trip into what might have been. Mark Williams leads 11-5 and requires just two frames to reach his first quarter-final at the Crucible.

It is hard for anyone who remembers Davis as the precocious genius of the early 80s to reconeile his position at the Crucible as the old guard. At 40, his birth date is in the 50s, while a good proportion of the other players belong to the 70s. Even Jimmy White, the next oldest survivor vill not be 36 until 2 May.

Like Jack Nicklaus he cannot contemplate playing when he is uncompetitive, but as he has just guaranteed a place in the top 16 for a record 19th successive season he can still dream of adding to his 72 major titles. "If I can come back here when I'm 50 and even pot just one ball it would be nice," he said after his first round win over Simon Bedford, "I might even smile."

There was scant evidence of a smile yesterday and very little either of his potting. Williams. who has risen from 119th to fourth in the world rankings in four years, began the day 5-3 ahead and accelerated away with breaks of 63, 43, 102, and 71. Davis could only watch and wait, just as he had fixed opponents to their chairs in his pomp.

Davis was facing the indigmity of being beaten a session early for the second year in sucleads but one mistake and it was Williams clearing up. At 11-3, he was facing a rout,

but with hopelessness comes calm and he ensured he would be involved today with breaks of 75 and 52 in the 15th and 16th frames. Barring a comeback of outstanding proportions, he has merely delayed the inevitable. Davis may be struggling but

John Parrott, another former champion, has every reason to feel encouraged after creating a 5-3 lead over Tony Drago which he will take into this morning's second session. Parron, 33, may be on the

television screens more often on A Question of Sport these days but he is still ranked seventh in the provisional rankings and his consistency is such that he has got to the quarter-finals or better in eight of the 11 events he has entered this season. Unlike Davis, he has no in-

tention of lingering, saying: "I can't see me running all over the place playing snooker at 40, never mind 50," and it was with his age in mind he took a complete break from practice after being beaten in the quarter-finals of the British Open by Hendry. "I'm not 21 and I need to

recharge my batteries," he said. Suitably freshened, he was quickly 3-1 up as he seized upon the mistakes that usually accrue in his opponent's attacking style.

Drago is a player who, in world championship terms, seems to belong to the past as his only quarter-final came 10 years ago, but he is currently higher in the rankings than he has ever been, 10th, and his century break in 210 seconds in 1995 hardly suggests tailing powers. He reined Parrott back with a break of 57 and when the 1991 champion stretched ahead again be

The St Helens coach. Shaun

McRae, who takes his team on

their annual trip to Anfield to-

morrow to play Warrington,

has responded to suggestions

that his commitment to the

club is declining.

ad impress ith shines

Jordan Keeps his options open

Basketba!

Dec. They, if I want to is so much in the air." Jordan said. "Scottie Pippen is still in a Chicago Bulls uniform, I'm newspaper columnists, televitrangle from the property of the average fan all seasons standing of the average fan all seasons standing of the property of the Bulls have been locked the property of the property of the Bulls have been locked the property of the property o Basketball Association playoffs just underway, it has only youen more frequent.

Nobody know what will happen to Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls after the NBA finals are over. Even Jordan is not sure. On Thursday, Jordannie visted he is sticking with his season-long pledge to play next with which he has won five ti-year, only if Phil Jackson returns thes. Jackson is calling the playas coach: But then, he added he still holds the option of playing for a new coach, should Jack-

the day before the Bulls open the play offs against New Jersey. "Or else to say, "I don't

want to play for whoever you oring in That sounds like a choice for the. I haven't chosen vet. All along, Jordan has linked

his fatore to Jackson, the coach offs the Buffs "last dance". "No one has definitely said that Phil is not going to be here or he doesn't have a contract or

social take a step he does have a contract; there ed in a magazine article that Rugby League

in a season-long soap opera. overshadowing their chase of another title. Pippen said he wanted to leave early in the season while the general manager, Jerry Krause, said Jordan would be welcomed back, but only if he would play for a new coach.

There remains an uneasy relationship between Krause and Jackson: Pippen said the chairman, Jerry Reinsdorf, could "go to bell" if he offers a oneyear contract for next season.

Meanwhile, Jordan suggest-

If the Bulls do win another title, there would have to be some serious compromises made should Reinsdorf decide

the team.

to keep the team intact for another year. "I'm pretty sure there would be a lot of mending going on because during the course of the year there have been some

perhaps Reinsdorf should sell

burned bridges, and I don't know if it's repairable." Jordan "That's something that has to be talked about at the end of the season and hopefully everybody is in a jovial mood and willing to take some of the things

they've said all year and sacri-

fice to some degree."

Eagles look for win before Wembley

By Dave Hadfield

SHEFFIELD and Wigan both have their last outings before Wembley tomorrow, but in very different circumstances.

The Eagles, without a Super League win in three attempts since their semi-final, hope for a morale-boosting win over fellow strugglers Huddersfield. Not that there is much

wrong with morale, according to their long-serving scrum-half. Mark Asion.

"We played badly against Hull, but we could have beaten both Castleford and Bradford." he said. "It will look a lot better after we beat Huddersfield."

may well disguise some of John Kear's Wembley intentions, the Eagles should be capable of breaking their duck. Huddersfield's squad is already depleted by injury, although their new loan signing from Leeds, Jamie Field, will be on the bench.

Unbeaten Wigan, by contrast, will field their likely Cup final team against London, mious Heary Paul, who will be on his way home after beloing New Zealand to a surprise Test win over Australia last night.

The Kiwis, who tour Britain in the autumn, gave the game a major boost in a country where it has lost some momentum by winning 22-16 in Auckland, the former Wigan and Leeds centre, Kevin Iro.

Even with a line-up which starring with two tries. At Central Park tomorrow.

> Farrell at stand-off, whilst London might field two ex-Wigan wingmen, Wes Cotton and Martin Offiah, who, in what is a prolonged drought by standards, has not scored for four matches. The other Paul, Bradford's

Robbie, is also on his way back from Auekland and will miss the match at Huli. The Bulls will hope that Graeme Bradley is fit to partner Shaun Edwards at half-back.

Salford last week.

the Paul-less Wigan use Andy

"Everyone knows I'm out of contract at the end of the season, but that is not in any way affecting my preparation for games," said McRae, who has been linked with Australian jobs at North Sydney and Newcastle.

"I hope to sit down with the club and discuss staving in the not too distant future, but that

will be a board decision." McRae hopes that Paul Sculthorne will be fit to play against his old club; if so he will be used in his best position of

Sporting Digest

Revenge for McAllister as **♦ Shaw falters**

Section of the sectio

3/14 - 5 G MESS

NORMA SHAW saw her reign as women's world indoor singles champion come to an end in Llanelli vesterday when she lost out in four sets to the Scottish and British titleholder. Caroline McAllister.

It was sweet revenge for the Scot, who was beaten by the County Durham player in last year's final.

When Norma won the third set to reduce my lead to 2-1, I thought there we go. avain'. I was 2-1 up in last year's final and lost it but I just dug in and was pleased with the way I played throughout the match," said the Scut after her four-set victory.

Caroline played more conswichfie throughout and deserved her win. I played a good shot to win the third set and I thought that might change things but Caroline continued where she had left off in the

fourth set," said Shaw. McAllister's linul upponent will be the England captain. Carol Ashby, from Eastbourse. who hattled to a straight-set victory over the last hope of the host country, Maureen Tanner, from the Rhondda.

Morgan hat-trick lifts Britain

ice hockey

GREAT BRITAIN ended another disappointing world championship campaign with a low-key 10-3 Pool B win over the relegated Netherlands in Jesenice yesterday.

Britain went into the game against the Dutch, who are without a win, knowing all hope of reaching the play-offs for promotion to Pool A had been lost by four defeats during the

Three times Britain took the lead with goals from Steve Morra, Paul Thompson - his first of the tournament - and Neil Motgan, only for the Netherlands to hit back.

However, a 7-0 final 20 minutes added a flattering touch to the scoreline, with Morgan completing his hat-trick by the 46th minute. The Nottingham Panthers

forward then added his fourth and Britain's sixth six minutes later, before Nicky Chinn and the Dutch netminder Martin Trommelen both received five minutes plus game misconduct penalties for roughing. In the last three-and-a-half

minutes Britain bolstered their total, as Doug McEwen, David Longstaff and Ashley Tait all found the net, with man-of-thematch Morgan completing the rout with his fifth.

Mackenzie makes headway

rounds of the series at Oulton

The 36-year-old Scot lapped time of Imin 35.207sec, an average speed of 104.70mph, to top the leaderboard from his Cadbury's Boost Yamaha teammate, Steve Hislop. Mackenzie, a first-round

winner last month at Brands NIALE MACKENZIE, the Hatch, is in determined mood double: British Superbike as he battles to gain the lead in Champion, set the pace on a the series. His former teamdrying track during practice for mate, Chris Walker, also a wintomorrow's third and fourth ner at the Kent circuit, holds a six-point advantage. Walker recorded the third

best time yesterday, ahead of the Cheshire circuit in a best James. Haydon, riding a Suzuki-The Australian Troy Bayliss on a Ducati, had set the pace during the wet first session,

but ended the day eighth over-

Morgan on a high following surprise win

Badminton

POUL ERIK HOYER-LAR-SEN, bidding to become the first four-time European champion, suffered a surprise semi-final defeat in Sofia yesterday while the world champion, Peter Rasmussen, pulled out injured.

Hoyer-Larsen, the 32-yearold Olympic gold medallist, lost 15-6 15-6, to his fellow Dane, Kenneth Jonassen. It was the best win of his career for the unseeded player, who carned a meeting in the final of the championships with top seed Peter Gade Christensen,

also of Denmark. - Gade Christensen, the world No 2, was handed his place in the final when Rasmussen withdrew with an ankle injury that could harm his chances of lining up for Denmark in the Thomas Cup finals in Hong Kong next month.

In the women's semi-finals, Kelly Morgan, of Wales, upset the Danish second seed, Meue Pedersen, 12-9 11-8, and will face the defending champion, Camilla Martin, today. Morgan, the third seed, beat Pedersen for the first time in three meetings for the best win of her career.

Badminton

Badminton

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS (Sofie):

Men: Singles semi-firata:: P Gade (Den)

bt P Rasmussen (Den) w/o; K Jonassen
(Den) bt P Hoyer (Den) 15-6 15-6 Doubles
semi-firats:: S Archer and C Hunt (Eng) bt

M Sognand and J Hylsr-Christensen (Den)
15-8 15-9; P Jonsson and P Arebon (Swe)
bt N Robertson and J Robertson (Eng)
15-10 5-10 5-10 Woment Singles semi-firats:
C Martin (Den) bt M Sorensen (Den) 17-12-11; K Morgan (Wal) bt M Pedersen (Den)
12-5 11-5-10 Woment Singles semi-firats:
C Martin (Den) bt M Sorensen (Den) 10-12-11; K Morgan (Wal) bt M Pedersen (Den)
12-5 15-10 Doubles semi-firate: M Thomsen & R Otten (Den) bt J Goode & D Kellogg (Eng) 15-5 10. A Jongensen & M Vange (Den) bt E Heuvel (& M Hoogland (Neft) 12-5 15-16 15-7 Mbad doubles quarter-firats: M Sognard & R Otsen (Den) bt C Hunt
& D Kellogg (Eng) 15-9 15-18 15-11; S Archer & J Goode (Eng) 15-9 15-18 15-11; S
Archer & J Goode (Eng) 15-9 15-18 15-11; S
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AMERICAN LEAGUE: Toxas 6 Tampa Bay 12: Cleveland 5 Chicago White Sox 4 MATIONAL LEAGUE: Pritisting 7 San Francisco 0; Milwashae 2 Los Angeles 1; Chicago Cubs 1 San Diego 4: Florida 3 Col-orado 4; Montreal 5 St Louis 2; Pritisdelphia 6 Cincinnati 3; Altaria 3 Arzona 1 Post-poned: New York Meja v Houston.

Basketball

DasketOralii
NBA PLAY-OFFS (atl series best at five)
Englam Conference; Indiana 106 Cleveland
77 (Indiana leads series 1-0); Charlotte 87 Alland 87 (Charlotte 86cd series 1-0). Western Conference: Houston 103 Utah 90
(Huuston leads series 1-0); Searhoran 102
Proenix 98 (Sen Antonio leads series 1-0).
ELROPEAN FINAL FOUR (Barcelona) Final: Kinder Bologne (II) 58 AEF Atlens 34.
Third-loustin place plany-off: Benetion Trevisio (II) 96 Partizon Belgrade 89.

WORLEN'S WORLD INDOORS CHAMP-IONSHIP (Lianelli) Semi-finals: C McAliseer (Sco) of N Shaw (Eng) 7-2 7-1 5-7 7-2 C Ashby (Eng) of M Tanner (Na) 7-1 7-4 7-4 Ashby (Eng) bt M Taniner (Mat) 7-1 7-4 7-4.
WATERLOO SPRING HANDICAP (Liverpool) Sub finalist W Speed (Wigan) 21 C
Salet (Vergrier) 18; C Fielding (Birmingham)
21 D Jerkinson (Sale) 17; F Burdetin (Backpool) 21 G Stater (Burthwood) 10; G Tellon
(Sale) 21 J Bradbury (Romiley) 12 A Daylon
(Metham) 21 J Bal (Tartlon) 20.

Drugs in sport The world swimming governing body, Fina, will decide today what sanctions

to impose on four Crimese swimmers who tested positive for banned sub-stances at the World Championships in January. Three women, Wang Luna, Car Huijue and Zhang Yi, and one man, Wang Wei, tested positive for tri-amterene at the worlds in Perth, Aus-tralia.

Football Leyton Orient have lost their appeal to the Football Association against a to the Football Association against a three-point deduction by the Football League for fielding ineligible players. The Third Division clubs former secretary, David Burron, has been charged with misconduct by the FA in connection with alleged administration irregularities.

ronsmouth nave given their manager, Alan Ball, a tour-year contract.

The tormer Wales defender, Paul Bodin, has been released from the last three months of his contract at Reading to take up the post of player-manager at Bath City. Sunderland have agreed a new three-year £17m shirt sponsorship deal

Portsmouth have given their manag-

with Vaux breweries. Bradford City's former England Under-18 midfielder Andrew Ö'Brien has signed a new contract that will keep him at the Yorkshire club until the year 2002.

THURSDAY'S LATE RESULTS: GM Vaushall Conference: Chehoring THURSDAY'S LATE RESULTS; GM Vauxhall Conference: Chelteritian 2 Stalybridge 0; Famborrough 3 Southport 2; Hayes 0 Dover 0; Stough 1 Kettering 1 Ryman League Premier Division: Borerum Wood 2 Heytridge 3, Bromley 1 Cheeham 2; Purfleet 1 Basingstoks 2 First Division: Berkhamsted 0 Urfindge 2; Leyton Permart 1 Greys 2; Abringdon flown 3 Worthing 0; Whysielael 1 Maderinsed 2 That Division: Kingsbury 2 Camberley 3, Hometurch 1 East Thurtock 2, UniBond League Premier Division: Ethiesy 3 Spermymoor 0; Winsford 3 Lancaster 0 First Division: Mattock 1 Grethal 1 Dr Martans League Southern Division: Baldock 1 Ertin 8, Betwedere 2; Yate 3 Margate 0, Jewson Eastern League Premier Division: Subvision: Martin Subvision: S rrist Livreion: Beckenham 5 Crockethill 1.
Croy Wonderers 1 Thomesmoad 1 North
West Counties League First Division: St
Helens 3 Glossop 1 Screwfix Divert League
Promet Division: Tyeron 2 Taurbon 1 Pontins League Premier Division: Nottingham
Forest 1 Derby 0. Avon Insurance Combastion First Division: Wattord 1 Oxford
Utd 0.

INTERNATIONAL PRIENDLY (Sanuago): Chile 2 (Margas 21, Salas 84) Colombia 2 (Preciado 79, 82).

Hull will have Gary Lester back at stand-off after a rib injury, which could well give them the midfield direction which was all they lacked in their defeat at

to impose on four Chinese swimmers

Ganton Golf Club, near Scarborough, will host the 2003 Walker Cup between Great Britain and Ireland, and the Unit-ed States.

GREATER GREENSBORO CLASSIC (North Carolins) Leading first-round scores (US unless stated): 65 H Sutton 65 D Frost (SA) C Perry 87 B Fauon, S Verlenk, B Esse, F Zoelfer 68 L Caments, R Mediate, T Dodd's (SA), B Wadkins, S Kendall, D Hart, J Magnines, 69 G Kratt, F Allem (SA), IM Bratley, J Kaye, G Hirangia, K Wentworth, B Ougloy, M Standfy, C Parry (Aus.), M Hulbert, D Edwards, D Hammond, C Dennis, J Johnston, GB: 78 S Lyle, PING WOMEN'S TOUR LEADERBOARD: 1 A Sorienstam (Swej 4549) pt; 2 K Webb

Hockey FOUR NATIONS MEN'S TOURNAMENT (Milton Keynes): England 6 Scotland 1

FOUR NATIONS WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT (Springfield, Massachussetts): United Sizies 2 India 0; England 4 Canada 0 ice hockey NHL PLAY-OFFS First round: Eastern Conference: Pritisburgh 2 Montreal 3 (of) (Montreal lead best of Seven Senos 1-0) Western Conference 1 Louis R Los Angeles 3 (St

Louis lead series 1-0). Louis lead series 1-0). WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS (Jesenice, Stovenie) Pool B: Great Britain 10 (Jetherlands 3 Rugby League TEST MATCH (Auckland): New Zealand 22 Australia 16 New Zealand; Tries N Iro (2) S Hoppe, T Hermansson, Goals M Ridge (5) Australia: Tries 7 Hill (2), S Renout Goals M Roome

Rugby Union SUPER-12 SERIES (Cenberra): ACT Erumbies (Aust 29 Wellington Humicones (NZ) 32: (Christchurch): Centerbury Ou-saders (NZ) 40 Orago Highanders (NZ) 24

Snooker WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (The Crucible, Shefficie) First round (Thursday's tate result): J White Jengh at 5 Headry (Scott Pearst): J Farrott (Eng leads T Drago (Malta) 5-3 M Williams (Wai) leads 5 Drays (Eng) 11-5 (both matches resume 10am today).

Speedway

loose forward.

THURSDAY'S LATE RESULTS: World Champlonship British semi-final (Shef-feld): C Stoneheuer (Sheffeld) 15. A Smith (unati) 14. G Cummigham (Peerboraugh) 12. 5 Smith (Sheffeld): 12 R Morton (IOW) 5. G Stead (unati) 8. Eithe League: Ipswich 60 kings Lynn 30.

EUROPEAN TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS (Hefsinki) Second qualifying round (Thursday's late results): Men: Pool A: England 4 Denmark 0 (D Hains bt C Virther 95 9-0 9-0, C Vialler bt M Korsberg 9-6 9-2 9-5. P. Lohnson bt M Sorensen 9-3 4-5 9-2 9-2. M Chaloner bt A Yeo 9-2 9-0 9-6) France 2 Norway 2 Pool B: Wales 4 5-9 9-1 0 Evans 11 Hains 9-6 9-3 9-2 6-7 9-9 10 Evans 11 Hains 9-6 9-3 9-2 6-7 9-9 10 Evans 11 Hains 9-6 9-3 9-3 9-7 G Davies bt Y def tenn 9-2 9-6 9-2). Finland 4-Germany 0 Pool C: Greece 4 Natway 0 Pool D: Ireland 4-Forugal 0 (D Ryan bt A Lima 9-2 9-2 9-1 P Foster bt 7 Alexandre 9-6 9-4 9-3 5-7 G Davies bt Y def tenn 9-2 9-6 9-2). Finland 9-2 9-2 9-1 P Foster bt 7 Alexandre 9-6 9-4 9-3 5-7 G Davies bt Y def tenn 9-2 9-6 9-2). Romey bt I Rocha 9-0 9-1 9-1 Pool E: Span 4-C sech Republic 0 Pool F: Netherlands 4-tsraef C Italy 4 Lectranstein 0. Women: Pool 4: England 5 Sweden 0 IS Wight bt E Sventy 9-9 9-2 9-4 L Charman bt J Wamberg 9-3 9-2 9-5 J Marin bt M Lundmart 9-1 9-1 9-9 0), Scalland 3 France 0 (C Wadded bt / Stock 9-4 9-2 9-5 9-1 9-3 S Mache bt C Costes 9-4 9-2 9-5 P. Mirmot bt C Vazin 9-7 9-1 2-9 9-0) Pool B: Germany 3 Belgium 0 Netherlands 3 Finland 0 Pool C: Denmark 2 Austria 1 Pool D: Span 3 Wales 0 (N Meneu bt A Hogan 9-7 9-3 9-0 E Santo bt J Weis 6-9 9-5 9-1 9-3 1 Sant bt G Germann 9-1 9-3 0), Included 3 Norway 0 (M Perry bt E Bibre 9-1 9-5 9-2 A Moreaver bt K Helgeland 10-9 3-2 9-0).

Table tennis

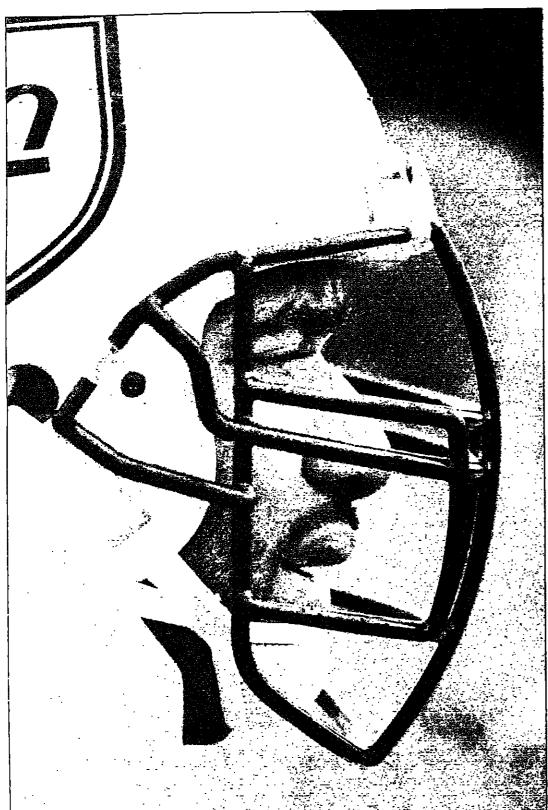
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS (EI ven): Men: Engand 4 Fortugal 1 (Eng names inst: M Syed to A Sava 21-8 21-12. B Bitington tost to A Grebensov 15-21 21-16 16-21, A Perry bi R Attar 21-8 21-15. C Pre-16 18-21, A Perry bit R Attar 21-8 21-35. G Pre-gn and A Perry bit A Grebertsov and R Attar 21-30 21-8, M Syac bit A Grebertsov 21-18 21-35; Ireland 4 Aperbagan 1; Wales 1 Span 4 Scotland 1 Croate 4 Women: Hungary 4 England 1 (Hung names first C Barothios bit 6 H Lower 21-15 17-21 18-27, M Fazokias bit A Hott 21-12 21-14 N Toth bit 10 Deagon 21-13 21-16 C Batch and N Toth bit N Deagon and H Lower 21-15 21-18 C Batori bit A Hott 21-11 21-13), Stotland 0 Slovenia 4, Ireland 0 Poland 4

Tennis

MONTE CARLO MEN'S OPEN Querter-finals: G Moya (Sp) bt A Corrella (Sp) 6-362. R Krojech (Neth) bt P Korda (Cz Repi 46-7-66-7. O Poline (Fr) bt F Sentora (Fr) 1-6-6-2-6-4.







Gridiron becomes gridlocked

IN 1991 the London Monarchs of the World League of American Football were one of the surprise success stories of the year. Benefiting from a massive promotional campaign and considerable on-field prowess, they attracted crowds of 40,000 to their contests at Wembley Stadium as the grid-iron game seemed to establish firm foundations beyond the confines of the United States.

Times have changed. The World League is now the NFL Europe League (reflecting closer ties with the parent National Football League), the team have been renamed the England Monarchs and the crowds have gone, driven away in large measure by a team who have won just 10 of their last 33 games and a franchise seemingly unable to settle on a permanent base.

Having moved from Wembley to White Hart Lane to Stamford Bridge, the Monarchs' 1998 campaign kicked off at the National Sports Centre, Crystal Palace, a small but vocal crowd of around 5,000 witnessing another heavy defeat at the hands of the Frankfurt Galaxy (pictured here). A week later at Ashton Gate, Bristol, another comprehensive loss was witnessed by a crowd of just 5,500. Tomorrow they take on the Scotish Claymores at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium.

For all the on-field gloom, an afternoon with the Monarchs is an event. A pre-game party is keenly

tish Claymores at Birmingham's Alexander Stadium. For all the on-field gloom, an afternoon with the Monarchs is an event. A pre-game party is keenly enjoyed by younger fans, while inside the stadium an enthusiastic public address announcer and the choreography of the Crown Jewels cheerleader troupe help keep the faithful entertained.

For all the problems in England, the six-team league is making progress on the continent. Frankfurt's gates consistently average around 30,000, while the Düsseldorf-based Rhein Fire now attract in excess of 20,000. The biggest success story, however, is the Amsterdam Admirals, who averaged less than 8,000 in 1995, but drew 22,000 for the visit of the Claymores two weeks ago.

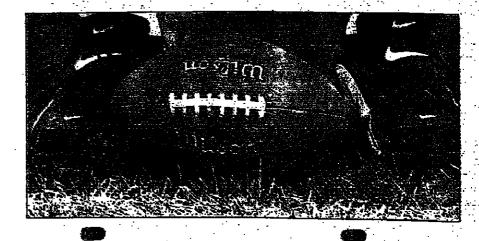
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT HALLAM













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Confessions of a football fan that are too true for comfort



CHRIS MAUME

SPORT ON TV

Fever Puch down about threequarters of the way through and never picked it up again. Not sure why. Too close to home, perhaps. But one doesn't need to have read the book to be aware of the phenomenon. Not only did it assist in football's swift journey to ubiquity in the early Nineties, it also helped spawn the New Confessional trend that has had publishers in such a tizzy at the same time.

So television has been absurdly slow off the mark, only just getting around to examining its author, Nick Hornby. BBC1's Omnibus film took a look at the Arsenal fan and former teacher, the rights to whose third book and second novel.

criticism only of myself, that I put \$3m. Reviewing it here might seem tangential, even given Fever Puch's subject matter, but there was plenty of sporting acnon, Homby and his biggest fan. Roddy Doyle, taking on Will Self, the bibliophile's Peter Storey (by which I mean critical rapher - at least I think that's what I mean) in a debate constructed in the editing room.

> dreoling Doyle coord restatically, kicking off with the confession that the first thing Fever Pitch taught him and his friends was that compared to Hornby's monomania, their affiliations were mere dalliances. Self, who has written exten-

In hagiographic inserts, a

sively about his former life as

Crew (OK, that's not strictly true, though you can sort of imagine it), was playing the Devil's Advocate from hell. The high-level identification that people seem to achieve with the characters and protagonists in Nick Hornby's books typifies hard man rather than pornog- a new sub-genre, which I would call Wimp Fiction," he said. These are books written for hoys who were always in the kitchen at parties." Not a category Self could possibly include

nimself in. He's far too cool. "I was always out there. wired out of my honce, dancing around and hopefully grabbing somebody." Charming image. What was bugging the bug-like one was "this kind of identifi-

I MUST confess, and this is a About A Boy, were sold for part of the West Ham Inter-City tracting, and other writers, like Helen [Bridger Jones] Fielding. who're dealing with a kind of quotidian confessional writing. As Martin Amis said, you start off with Homer, where fiction was dealing with heroics, you run down to Shakespeare, where hetion was dealing with kings, down to Joyce, where fiction was dealing with Bloom in Dublin. Now we've run down to Nick Homby and Helen Fielding. who are dealing, essentially, with wimpish non-entities

moaning about their neuroses. The editors missed a trick here; they should have cut straight to Homby later on discussing About A Boy. One of the two main characters is "Will, who is very shallow... very much cation that Nick's work is at- a product of men's magazine cul-

ture." In fact, Self admitted that his assessment of Hornby's literary worth does not emanate from a moral Olympus. "The question of bitterness and rivalry over something like sales. that my rather acerbic comments might be motivated by my own considerably lesser sales, is a very, very just and worthy one. Every writer envies other writers who sell more." There is a sting, of course. "But I wouldn't wish the sales if it weren't for something I considered worthy."

In the spirit of Orwell and Gower (Ernest, not David) Doyle submitted a paean to the art of writing clearly and simply as evidence in Hornby's defence. "If work is readable, or accessible," he says, "therefore it's shallow. You must pile on the

saurus to look for the odd obscure word. Then you get a bit of depth. In fact, writing as accessible, as fantastically readable and as entertaining as Nick does takes a huge amount of effort and an awful lot of skill."

Self, though, was in the area advancing on goal. If I were siding with Homby and Doyle, I might say that if Hornby's team plays at Arsenal Stadium, Highbury, Self's plays at Arsehole Stadium, Highbrow, But as a critic I could hardly pillory him for the relish with which he lashed out.

"It's readability masqueradally see anything to be gained from it," he said. Self believes he and his colleagues have a

clauses, you must go to the the- moral duty that is nowhere near close to being fulfilled by the Homby school of writing.

What we as writers need is to attack head-on the way in which television, the way in which film, the way in which advertising destroy the ability to think concentratedly over long periods. And if we're going to he accused of heing clitist or highbrow, so be it. That is our job." His nostrils flared.

Hornby was unafraid of the M-word, though, "People want to read but they can't find stuff that means anything to them. There is a middle brow section of the population that's being eving as profundity, and I don't renal and Middle England has a ring to it that he has nothing to be ashamed about.

Under threat from tough Norwegians

wasn't ail good either as we crossed the line sixth into Baltimore at the end of the threeday hike up the east coast of the United States from Fort Lauderdale. A lot of people were complaining about a hard time in the Gulf Stream, when the wind shifted into the north against the three-to-four knot flow of the current and kicked it into a bit of a chop.

I didn't think it was too bad as far as discomfort goes, but it was just what we did not want for Merit Cup. There is no way we are set up to do well in any upwind work and that settled the Whitbread any realistic hopes for a podium

At one stage we were eighth legs to go, we are still third on the water and fating the overall possibility of slipping from But not by a lot. Our margin third to fourth overall But, as of comfort over Chessie Rac-I said, it was not all bad, and ing has increased to 43 points we were finally given a break , but Knut Frostad, fourth by when we turned into Chesa- eight points behind us in peake Bay with the wind be immovation Kvaerner, is penhind us, 120 miles of that water lously close. There are 12 in front other and to have to be the amount of the pull back a back of the company a place on offer for the pull back a back of the company are across the Atlantic to

fastest average time of all the ... finish ahead of the Norwegians perhaps helped a little bit by bronze medal place. And we for the next leg will bringing the breeze up with us. have to beat Gunnar Krantz's Glen Sowry, my old New We managed to pass John Swedish Match by an even Zealand Endeavour, Steinlager, Kostecki and Dennis Conner in bigger margin if we are to chal- and 1992 America's Cup, colthe process, and, with just two lenge for second

Basketbali

By Richard Taylor

THE Budweiser League lost

one of its great talkers yester-

day, temporanily at least, when

Bob Donewald left Leicester

City Riders. Unusually for

Donewald in his two-year career

with the club, the 28-year-old

American kept his comments to

a minimum. "Twe been lined up

for a number of jobs, including

some in America." he said.

"I've got a number of options."

club was that he had resigned

with one year of his contract still

to run, but such had been the

The official line from the



Grant Dalton, the skipper of Merit

Cup, will be looking over his shoulder on the next leg of

ill back a to the recorded the star Rockelle, so we have to ine yachts up those last miles, if we want to hold on to the

Donewald lost for words after resignation

The standard of this race is partly shown by the fact that there have been five different winners from the seven legs so far. And for those who think that Roy Heiner put Brunel Sunergy in front just by taking some sort of reckless flyer the option he took was always there and always had logic. So good on Brunel, even if it did mean that the only boat designed by Judel-Vrolijk came first into the Annapolis home waters of Whitbread designer Bruce Farr.

The leg itself was a sort of 80-hour Fastnet Race, not all that hard, and we were able to run a normal watch system for most of the three days. That was important, so we could get some sleep for when we came into the Chesapeake. We had planned a full court press for the last 120 hours, we were ready for that, and it paid.

There was no damage to the boat and we are enjoying what will be a 11-day stopover. Our short-course race expert, Tom Dodson, has gone back to New Zealand, but we expect him to be on board again for the last leg from La Rochelle.

The 12th spot on our boat league.



Juninho signs autographs for Atletico Madrid supporters at the club's Vincente Calderon stadium after announcing his return to match fitness. The Brazilian broke his leg in a league match less than three months ago

(30), REPRESENTATIVE MATCH: Combined Sovices Under-21 v England Students (12:30) (at Twickenham). WILLIS CORRON TROPHY: Royal Navy v Army (30) (at Twickenham).

SWALEC CUP Semi-Final: Sobw Vale v Newport (50) (at Pomypridd).

Newport (5.0) (at Pomyondo).
WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE Premier Division: Cardiff'y Portypridd (2.30). First Division: Blackwood v Aberavon (2.30). Caephility v Bonymann (2.30); Cross Keys v Maesteg (2.30); Landovery v Aberillery (2.30); Newbridge v Durwant (2.30); Pontypool v Treortry (2.30), Rumney v LIWIC (Cardiff Institute) (2.30); South Wales Poice v Maester, (2.30).

v Menthyr (2:30).
TENNENTS SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP Division 1A: Melrose v Curne (3.0): Watsonians v West of Scotland (3.0): Division 1B: Ediriburgh Academicals v Jed-Forest (3.0). String County v Henrich FP (3.0). Division 2A: Gate v Kimenrock (3.0); Letso v Dundee HSFP (3.0): Division 2B: Edgar v Musselburgh (3.0); Kirichaldy v Preston Lodge (3.0). Division 3A: Aberdeen GSFP v Grangmouth (3.0); Selfort v Gordonians (3.0). Division 3B: Genrothes v Hilhead/Jordanhil (3.0).

Alis RRSH LEAGUE Final: Shannon v St

AIB IRISH LEAGUE Final: Shareron v St Marys (330) (at Lansdovme Road, Dublin) Second Division Play-off second leg: Dun-

NEL Men's First Division Play-offs semi-finals second leg: Richmond (102) v Tees-side (82) (730); Stevenage (73) v Plymouth (78) (80).

ELITE LEAGUE: Eastbourne v Oxford (730).

SPEEDWAY STAR CLIP: Coventry v Wolver-hampton (730).

PREMIER LEAGUE CUP: Berwick v Glas-gow (7.0); Edinburgh v Sheffield (7.0).

FOUR NATIONS TOURNAMENT: Scotland whater (120): England v England Lons (20) (at Millon Keynes National Stedium).

Other sports

BADMINTON: Britist, Grand Starn (at Car-

ddf).

BOWLS: English Bowls Players Association Singles Championship (at Welkingborough)
BOMRNG: WBD suppormiddleweight title contest: J Catraghe (holder) (Wall) v J C Generaz (Pan) (pals supporting bill) (at National Lee Rink, Cardill)

MOTORCYCLING: British Superbike Champmorton recommens bream superiors de anti-onship (ar Outron Park) MOTOR RACING: Auto Trader British Tour-ng Car Champonship (at Shierstone). RALLYING: Prelii International Rally (stan Carliste).

Carliste). SNOOKER: Embassy World Championship (at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield).

3.0 uniest stated
DR MARTENS LEAGUE Midland Division;
Brackley v Reddich (20) Southern Division;
Fareham v Trowfordge: Margate v Canderlord (120).
UNIBOND LEAGUE First Division; Betper

FA SUNDAY CUP Finat: Olympic Star v St FA SUNDAY CUP Finat: Olympic Star v St

FA SUNDAY CUP Final: Olympic Star volocipis at London Road, Paterborough).

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE:
Wick Academy v Forres Mechanics (20).

HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF
PELAND Premier Division: Cork City v Botermans (20). St Patrick's Athlete v Dundals
(32); UCD v Stigo Rovers (315).

EUROPEAN LINDER-16 CHAMPIONSHIP
Forum & Demmark v Sweden (at Broadwood

EUROPEAN UNDER-16 CHAMPIONSHIP Group A: Denrark v Sweden (at Broadword Stedium, Cumbernaud); Greece v Iceland (at Love Street, Passlevi, Group B: Liechi-enstein v Norwiny (at Almandules Stadium, Livingstan); Portugal v Italy (at Fir Park, Moth-erwell), Group C: Scotland v Republic of Ire-land (at Porthpark stadium, Stufing); Spain v Firland (at McDearme Park, Perth), Group D: Creatia v Uldrame (at Caledonian Stadium, Inverniess); Russia v Israel (at Victoria Perk, Dingwall).

JB SPORTS SUPER LEAGUE: Halfax v Castleford (3.0). Huddersteld v Sneffeld (2.30): Half v Brattord (3.15); St Heters v War-rington (3.0) (et Antielo): Wigan v London

Rugby League

TOMORROW

Football

Benfica may be sent down

Portugal

NEXT season Graeme Souness and his Benfica team might find themselves playing in the European Champions' League - or in the Portuguese Second Division.

The Lisbon club have been in a state of financial crisis since long before Souness joined them as coach - a problem which has prevented the former Liverpool and Rangers manager spending freely in the transfer market. Yesterday, however, the

Benfica chairman João Vale e Azevedo said, on his return from a meeting with bankers in London, that the club were now in a position to settle their debts. He declined to give details, but it is understood that Benfica have raised a loan of about £35m with international banks.

Benfica must make a downpayment to the state of about £7m before the end of May in order to qualify for a scheme allowing Portuguese clubs to spread out repayment of outstanding tax liabilities.

Failure to do so could result in automatic relegation to posal currentiv being debated by the Portuguese Foothall Federation. Currently second in the First Division. Benfica are on the brink of qualifying for next term's Champions' League qualifying round.

Hong Kong

A HONG KONG newspaper apologised this week for us- nal.

around THE WORLD

RUPERT METCALF

ing a picture of Adolf Hitler to illustrate a story about Germany's World Cup squad. The paper said it had not means to offend anyone. The picture of Huler was

purely part of the layout, and had no other meaning. Apple Daily said in a statemen! 'if it led to unhappiness for any people or groups, we apole-

The apology was described as "tepid" by Rabbi Yaakov Kermaier of Hong Kong's Ohel Leah Synagogue, "I think it was a little bit weak." he said. "They used a mass-murderer the Second Division, under a to promote a tootball game. and that's terribly wrong.

France

LENS can clinch the French championship if they beat Bastia at home and Metz drop points at Toulouse tonight. Lens have 64 points and Metz 62 with two games to go. Lens could do the double - they play Paris St-Germain in the Cup fi-



46 days... until the World Cup finals begin in France

JUNINHO, Brazil's former Middlesbrough forward, could be back in action on 3 May, his father, Osvaldo, told Spanish journalists this week. On that date Juninho, who has been out for three months because of a broken left leg, hopes to play for Atletico Madrid at Mallorca. "Physically and mentally he is over his broken leg," Osvaldo Giroldo Snr said. Juninho, who has now returned to Spain after recuperating in Brazil, hopes to prove his fitness to the Brazilian coach, Mario Zagallo.

buzz on basketball's bush telev Barton Rovers, Molesey v Leylon Pervant, Romford v Chertsey, Staines v Croydon; Theme v Aldershot; Wembley v Blaricey; Wolvingham v Abingdon Town; Worthing v Whyteleets, Second Division: Bensteed v Whyteleets, Second Division: Bensteed v Worthing v Whyteleets, Second Division: Bensteed v Rotting v Whyteleets, Second Division: Bensteed v Worthing v Horsey, Barking v Leghnon; Bensteed v Rotting Canvey Island v Edgware; Challents of Period v Hungarind; Weldsteiner St. Horsey, East Thilamot, Camberley v Markey, Whiteleets, Welster, Whiteleets, Welster, Whiteleets, Welster, Welster Weekend fixture guide TODAY

Football 3.0 unless stand GM Vathti-ALL CONFERE Dover v Moracambia

Rellord v Stavenage
Prinsor LEAGUE Preinter Distilion: Agesbury Stabbars, Besingstöles v Sutton Utcl;
Borshars Wood v Nerdon; Bromley v
Yesting, Carahalton v Oxford Cay. Degerham & Rechaldon v Duterd; Harrow Borcuph v Enfield; Hitchin v Chesham;
Kingstorian v Harrow Borv Gravesend & Northibaet; First Bivisions:
Berthamated v Harroton; Gasya v Labridge;
Lestherhead v Bognor Ragis; Makderhead

TODAY'S NUMBER

88

The age of the oldest runner in tomorrow's London Marathon, Abraham Weintraub. The oldest female will be Britain's Jenny Wood Allen, aged 86, who will be running in her 12th successive London Marathon

signed and we wish him well. The club board met on Thursday night and his offer to resign was quickly accepted and we're

minent departure that the Rid-

ers have already had

applications to replace him.

Club director Kevin Rout-

ledge, who is also the League chairman, said: "Bob has removing on." Donewald led the club to the

National Cup final in January, which they lost to Thames Valley Tigers, but the season ended badly, with failure to reach the play-off quarter-finals.

It was Donewald's brush with Tigers and their coach, Paul James, which many saw as the

sop v Boxton, President's Cup final trast lag: Guissian's Runcom.

GR MARTENS LEAGUE Premier Division:
Atheristore v Forest Green; Beth v Krigts byrn; Glouceser v Cambridge City, Habaseren Reyn v Crateriey, Nesthyr Tydli v Bromsgrove, Nunescon v Ashlord; Salebury v Rothwelt; Sittingbourne v Dorchester; St Leonards v Greeky Rovers; Emmorth v Barton; Worcester v Hastings, Michael Division: Bedworth v Stafford, Blakenal v Grantham; Hinckley Util v Reston; Paget Rangers v Evestenn; RC Warwick v Corby; Raunds v Sutton Coldified; Shepshad v Brackley; Stouthridge v Softwil; vS Rugby elision: Wisbech v Heddish, Southern Division: Chelmsford v Havarr; Erith 8. Betvedore v Cavertox; Flech v Tow-bridge; Margate v Clevedon; Newport (Gwent) v Farsham; Newport (Gwent) v Farsham; Newport (Weston-augerhord; Enbridge v Bastley; Weston-augerhord; Farbridge v Bastley; Weston-augerhord; Farbridge v Bastley; Weston-augerhord; Farbridge v Waterhoode; Yate v Kney Rodock.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE FIRST DI-

the state of the s

graph about Donewald's im- initial step in his inevitable downfall.

Donewald publicly accused James of going behind Tigets' former coach Mick Bett's back to oust him, bringing the threat of legal action from their multi-millionaire owner John Nike. James, a former Rider and England international, was always a strong favourite with the Granby Halls crowd. His twin brothers Eddie and John are still linked with the club and his family live in Leicester.

The incident caused deep embarrassment and Routledge said yesterday: "We were not impressed with Bob's comments, but the incident was not the trigger to his leaving."

an; Lordswood v Deal; Swanley Furnasa v Sheppey: Tharmesmead v Ramsgata; Tun-bridge Weds v VCD Athletic.

bridge Wells v VCD Attletic.
UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE
Premier Division: Boston Town v
Northsmotion Spencer, Desborrugh v BuckIngham Town: Eynesbury v Bourne; Potton
v Stamford; St Neots v Ford Sports; Spading v Stottoid; Stewarts & Linyds Corby v
Cogerhor; Wellingborough v Minless Blackstone; Wootton v Holbeach.

That HET SUSSEY COUNTY (FACURE First

stone; Wootton v Holbeach:
UNALET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE First
Division: Arundel V Peacehaven & Tekcombe; Eastbourne Town v Selsey (29);
Hassocks v Mile Oak; Horsham YMCA v
Langney Sports; Pagham v Portied; Redhill v Ringmer; Shoreham v Haksham;
Whitehawk v Littehampton; Wick v Burgess
Hill

HILL
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE Premier Division: Barnstaple y Brisington; Bridgweis y Mengotsfield; Chippenham y Backweit;
Emore y Westbury; Melestam y Creut; Odd
Down y Bideford; Therston y Caine; Rorington y Kaynsham; Teuriton y Paulton,
NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE First
Division: Atherton LR y Glossop; Derwan,
y Kidagrova; Maine Road y Holker Old Boys;
Newcastle: Town y Citherne; St Helens y
Possendale; Saticrd y Mossley; Vauchal GM
y Borscough; Warrington y Nanhytich
NORTHEERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE

v Burscough: Warrington v Narrwich NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE Pramier Division: Armitiorpa v Cesett Town; Arnold v Curzon Ashton; Derably v Ed-clashit; Matthy v Pontefract; Osatti Abion u Liversedge; Pedesing v Hatfield Main; Sel-by v Huckinal; Triackley v Morth Ferriby Narren und revolucies autor AMI AL

by v Huckinal; Thackley v Narth Ferrity.
INTERLINK EXPRESS MIDLAND ALLIANCE: Bolumers St Michaels v Kreybersley Victorie: King's Norton v Stepenhilt.
Oxfoury v Strationd; Palead v Barwel; Rocester v Wednesseld; Rushall v Bloxwich;
West Midlands Police v Pershore.
Inseroal wiresserv i Bartier. Naudwaru v

pomer, whitcharch v Christiausch.
JEWSON EASTERN LEAGUE Premier Di-vision: Diss: Town v Heistead; By v Fe-linstonet; Faltemann v Woodchridge; Great Yannouth v Sudbury Wenderers; Harvich & Perlegion v Stownstriet Lovestoft v Cac-tor; Scham v Watton; Sudbury v Wrochem;

v Met Police (3.0); North Walsham v Chel-tenham (3.0); Redruft v Weston-super-Mare (3.0). Tiptree v Histon; Warboys v Gorleston.

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTHERN
LEAGUE First Divisions Billinghism Town
v Gusborough; Consett v Seahsm; Durham
v Perrith; Essington v Jamow, Murlon v Monpeth; South Shelds v Bedington Terries;
Stockton v Crook, Tow Lew v Dunston FB
PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND
LEAGUE; Cove Ranges v Fort William; Wick
Academy v Lossiemouth.

McEWAN'S LAGER NORTH CUP Final:
Inemess Caledonian Tristia v Eighr City (at
Caledonian stadium, Inverness).

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE Premier Division; Artis v Bellymens; Glerborn v Critsaders; Lintled v Glensvon; Omagh v
Colereins; Portadown v Citionnils, First Dvision; Bangor v Newry; Distilary v Bellycare; Lame v Dungarnon Swifts; Linawedy
v Carlot, Rengers.

LEAGUE OF WALES; Aberystyin v

v Carrick Rengers.
LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberystwyth v
Weshpool (2:30); Barry v Fint (2:30); Caersus v Corwy (2:30); Cermarthen v Bangor
City (2:30); Cermaes Bay v Finayeder (2:30);
Commbran v Caernaerion (2:0); Ebbw Vale v
TNS Liensantifraid (2:0); Inter Canbe Fel
Cardiff v Connains Cuay Nomads (2:30);
Porthanadog v Newtown (2:30); Finyl v
Haverfordwest (2:0);
HARP LAGGER NATHONAL LEAGUE OF

HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE OF IRELAND Premier Division: Detry City v

PRUGDY Union
ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP One:
Beth v Sale (30); Leicester v Saracene (2:5);
London Irlan v Hartequera (30); Richmond
v Gloucester (30), Premiership Two: Bedford v Backheah (30); Moseley v Fydic (30);
Ometh Wakefield (30); Romentam v Exeter
(30); Waterloo v Coverny (30); West Hartlepool v London Scottleh (30).

IEMEGAR MATRIANAL V EAGUE Open Har.

pol v London Scottien (3.0).

JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE One: Harrogate v Rosslyn Park (3.0); Leeds v Whartsdale (7.30); Morley v Neebury (3.0); Nottingham v Lydney (3.0); Otiey v London Weistn (3.0); Reading v Liverpool 31 Herban (3.0); Rugby v Wordener (3.0); Two North-Aspatria v Walself (3.0); Brimanpham/Schlaul v Sheffield (3.0); Kendal v Sandel (3.0); Manchestar v Nuneaton (3.0); Preston Grasshoppers v Luchfield (3.0); Sedgley Park v Hindley (3.0); Slourbridge v Winnington Park (3.0); Two Southe Barking v Baberd (3.0); Sidgley Rat v Esher (3.0); Camberley v Plymouth (3.0); Cafhon v Henley (3.0); Havant

Rugby Union

(Cardiff institute) v Menthyr (2:30).

Basketbali

(635) First Division: Featherstone v White-haven (230): Hunsiet v Rochdale (330): Keghley v Swinton (30): Leigh v Hull KR (30): Widnes v Wakefield (30): Second Division: Batley v Workington (325): Doncaster v Od-ham (30): York v Barrow (630).

Rugby Union ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP One: Newcastle v Bristol (3.0); Wasps v Northamp-SWALEC CUP Semi-final: Lianelli v Seven Sisters (345) (at Neath).

Speedway WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: British semi-final (2:30) (at Newport). SPEEDWAY STAR CUP: Poole v King's Lyrn (3:30). PREMIER LEAGUE: Glasgow v Peterbor-

PREMIER LEAGUE CUP: Newcastle y Hull Hockey

HOCKEY
FOUR NATIONS TOURNAMENT: England Lons v Scotland (330am), England v Wales (10) at Mitton Keynes National stadium)
RAF CAREERS YOUTH FINALS: Under-14: Repton v Mattield (11:5), Under-16: \$1 George's College (5:0) for Mitton Keynes National stadium)
WOMEN'S ENA CUP Semi-finals: Cition Scotland V Hightown (12:0): Stough v Loughborough Students (2:0): Semi-finals: Decade Ramboolugh scooms (20); WOMEN'S PLATE Semi-finels: Decade Ram-blers & Reading (20); Dulwich & Maidenhead (120).

ATHLETICS: London Merathon. BADMINTON: Striish Grand Stam (at Cal-

Offi,

BOWLS: English Bowls Players Association
Singles Championiship (at Wellingborough).

MOTORICYCLING: British Superbike
Championiship (at Outton Park).

MOTOR RACING: Auto Trader British Touring Car Championiship (at Swerstone).

Bally (star) RALLYING: Pres Imernational Rally (start SNOOKER: Embassy World Championship (at the Cruciple Theatre, Shelbeld)

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

 I laid a few ghosts tonight. Jimmy White after beating Stephen Hendry at the World Snooker Championship.

I thought he gave the ball away a little cheaply early on but some of the things he eventually did were superb. Peter Taylor, England B coach, on the hat-trick. man Matt Le Tissier.

It makes me feel like weeping: he's a guy I like so much Roy Francis, the fight's referee, on the battering Chris Eubank took from Carl Thompson

I was sorely provoked. Melvin Sylvester, a tootball referee who sent him-

self off after punching a He had one break point

in the third set and made his one break point. I had 101 break points and made zero. Greg Rusedski explains his defeat by Boris Becker at Monte Carlo.

Colombia: a World Cup nation in the grip of the drugs lords

Not content with buying clubs and running the game, the Colombian mafia now own their own players. David Smith reports on the criminal culture that has taken over the soul of one of England's opponents in France this summer

the call comes in the early hours. Jose-Luis. once a sterling defender for club and country, is on the line saying he can meet in the morning. And that he will talk, with certain provisos. No cameras whatsoever. No microphones. And he chooses the venue, a coffee shop in a fairly rundown neighbourhood of Bogota.

That morning I spend three hours with a man who has won it all in Latin America: league championships, international caps, two South American cups. When I ask him what is on my mind he gives me the kind of knowing look that comes only from those who know. "Soccer in this country is a sordid business, it reflects the culture completely," he warms as he settles down to the first of many coffees. "It is owned by the mafia, run by the mafia, and now it's played by the mafiosi. Even in the World Cup." He pauses, letting the thought sink in. "Especially in the World Cup.

Jose Luis (not his real name, at his request) dismisses my suggestion that the authorities have tried to clean up their act since the debacle of the 1994 World Cup in the United States. "You can't imagine how 'podrido' the game is here." he says. I want to go to my dictionary, but the ageing Spanish of mine recalls the world, "Podrido" means putrid.

Te is the kind of player the eye seizes upon early in a game, the kind of talent the eye stays with. He is fast - deceptively so, in the way Tom Finney was in the 1950s. He can dribble - not quite with the fluency of a George Best. but on a good day he is apt to imitate the best of Best in the late 1960s. He can finish, faintly reminiscent of a Paolo Rossi in the 1978 or 1982 World Cups, sometimes deadly once that window of half chances opens inside the box.

His name is Anthony de Avila. He plays for the tragic tootball dynasty of the 1990s. Colombia. He is in excellent form, despite banishment to the nether reaches of the game in Latin America. And unless some lawyer from the United States Government stops him, or he is assassinated (either has to be a possibility). De Avila will be lining up, a rather oldfashioned right-winger, against England on 26 June in the town of Lens in northern France in a potentially decisive group game of the 1998 World Cup.

What has this man done to deserve such infamy? Well. De Avila carries extraordinary baggage, even by the standards of Latin America. In another age, from this corner of the world, Di Stefano may have exported the ability to carouse as much as he played; Juitzinho the capacity to drink as freely as he scored; Maradona the licence to drug the body as often as a come-day warranted.

But De Avila represents another breed, the like of which not even Latin America has produced before. He is a child of the drug lords, the murderous mafia that all but runs a country like Colombia. unashamedly so; the ultimate standard-bearer in the modern game of the cocktail of power, money and influence that goes with tootball everywhere these days - the vortex that takes a raw, uneducated kid and makes him a god yet leaves him so easily influenced by those who pay his wages, tell him what drugs to take, what shirt to wear. It happens elsewhere too, probably, it is just that we do not see it. In a country like Colombia the process is naked to the eye, as visible as De Avila's talent in the 18-yard box.

Witness what happened on a sweltering, stormy afternoon last August in the port city of Baranquilla, in northern Colombia, on the Caribbean coast, For years the Colombians have played the important matches there, the qualifiers for the World Cup and the grudge matches with the old enemies like Peru and Argentina. The Metropolitan Stadium is akin to a steam room, they say: the crowd invariably furious to the point of being manie, the atmosphere - for a visiting team - decidedly hostile, deliberately laced with the threat of actual bodily harm if the result goes the wrong way. Colombia have scored some famous victories in the rare ambience of Baranquilla.

This afternoon, against Ecuador in the final qualifier before France, is no exception. If the great players know how to pick their moments, then De Avila does just that. It is 0-0, with three minutes left, in a game Colombia must win. And "El Muchacho" (the kid, as De Avila is known, even though he is now 34) seals it with a goal of classic quality. Lazily, almost indifferently, with little hint of the clinical finish to follow, he pulls down a long ball pumped into the edge of the box. He turns his defender one way, then takes himself the other. He shoots home from the vicinity of the penalty spot as if it is a practice match. The crowd explodes. The kid raises his arms towards God, crosses himself, then races towards the stands and sinks to the ground in silent communion with the adoring nation. It is the goal that will take Colombia, such figures of tragedy and collapse in World Cup '94, to France '98.

What happens next is a source of some controversy. De Avila's friends contend he is carried away by the moment. His critics insist it is deliberate. He himself has suggested he was misquoted. Whatevor the motivation, the truth is inescapable; it is recorded on a videotape buried in the archive of the state television service, Caracol, in the capital, Bogota, And the videotape does not lie.

De Avila, interviewed live on the pitch the secand the game ends, does something surreal, something that is more shocking every time you see the







Hero and villains: Anthony de Avila (top), scorer of the goal that took Colombia to the World Cup, shows his ball skills, while the law catches up Photographs: AP and Reuters with the brother drugs barons Gilberto (above left) and Miguel (above right) Rodriguez Orejuella

ing a prayer. "I give this triumph to two men who have been deprived of their liberty," he says, "I dedicate my goal, with respect and love, to Gilberto and Miguel." It's like Alan Shearer saying he owes it all to the Kray twins.

■ ilberto and Miguel. Otherwise known as the Brothers: Gilberto and Miguel Rodriguez Orequella, founders and leaders of the Cali cartel. Estimated annual carnings, from the production and sale of heroin and cocaine: a billion dollars. Estimated assets: seven to eight billion dollars. Current address: La Modelo Prison, Bogota, Family motto: "Better a grave in Colombia than a jail in the United States."

The Brothers, by all accounts, enjoyed watching their boy Anthony score that goal from their exclusive cell block in La Modelo, where their vast cadre of some 60 personal lawyers visit regularly, bringing them new cellphones so they can control their global empire with relative impunity.

In the second year of a jail term that will probably end in the year 2001, well ahead of schedule. De Avila's goal and dedication represented yet an-

P

other reminder of the extraordinary power these two drug lords wield.

Once they were bank robbers and up-country bandits. Then they discovered the marketing attractions of cocaine - chiefly, its phenomenal street value in the major cities of the United States. Unlike their one-time rival for drug hegemony, the infamous Pablo Escobar, they appear to be subtle players, not thugs, even though they have bombed, maimed and slaughtered left, right and middle down the years. So they have bought their way into almost everything in Colombia: the Government, the judiciary, the high street, where they own a nationwide chain of chemists (called Discount Drugs). And, of course, the Brothers bought their way into football.

Don Miguel is the soccer aficionado, it seems, the Brother behind the decision to purchase their bometown team. America of Cali. Miguel, who celebrates in the nickname of "The Chess Player," believed it a wise investment: certainly a convenient way to launder vast amounts of illegal drug money. as well as giving him status in the community of Cali.

Under the leadership of Don Miguel the team flourished. A key player, and personal favourite, was De Avila, signed as a 15-year-old fresh from the beach-

es of his home in Santa Marta, up on the Atlantic coast. De Avila was a prodigy, brought to market by his father, who sold him to Don Miguel for a minibus and left him completely in the hands of the club.

e Avila "belongs to the Brothers. He is their property," explains Jose-Luis, the former international turned whistle-blower when he finally agrees to talk to me in Bogota. "I don't think Anthony understands the significance of what he's done, how it tarnishes him and the national team. He just thinks he owes it to Don Miguel, and to himself to dedicate the goal. It's his way of saying thank you."

Jose-Luis then takes my notebook and walks me through the reality of life in Colombia's Premier League. "The authorities have tried to purge the game of the mafiosi, with new laws and regulations, but they can't," he says. By his estimate there are only six "clean" teams, by which he means ownership free of the drug cartels. He reels off the names with the casy familiarity of a man who has played in the stadiums of these teams, met the bosses, had a drink with them after a game. Millionarios of Bogota, he says, owned by three families related to the late Gon-

zalo Rodriguez Gacha, arguably the most violent of all the drug lords; Envigado, bequeathed by Pablo Escobar to a chief lieutenant in the Medellin drug cartel; Quindio, the property of an Armenian syndicate: Juniors of Baranquilla, the prize possession of a senator said to have close ties to the drug lords (so close that the United States recently refused him a visa to visit Washington); Santa Fe, controlled by Cesar Villegas, one-time head of the Colombian Football Federation, now in jail for 'illegal enrichment' (which is codespeak in Colombia for laundering drugmoney). He chuckles when I raise America of Cali, De Avila's first team. "The Brothers say it's now the property of one of their sisters, Maria Eugenia." he reveals. "So she's the chairman of the club. OK?"

I wonder what is in this for some of the richest men in the world. Why do the drug lords need a football club, or two, or three, or however many they have? Jose-Luis looks at me like a child in need of a simple lesson. He turns the page of my notebook and draws me a diagram.

Futbol =status = poder (power)

[Gambling] [Buying/selling][Public relations

Power=the state

You see, through football, the drug lords have bought their way, absolutely, into the State. Soccer gives them a way to gamble without ever losing, to buy and sell legitimately, to have access to the mass media whenever they want. Come Saturday evening. or Sunday afternoon, the people of Colombia are watching their teams, their players, their property, and everyone knows that it's theirs," Jose-Luis concludes. "Come World Cup time, the drug lords have Anthony de Avila out scoring goals for them. First for them. Then for Colombia.

ndeed they do. And, finally, a rare encounter with Anthony de Avila confirms it in a way I had never expected, not even all the end of chases that had lasted months.

A Colombian sports journalist, who reiterated almost everything Jose-Luis said, had warned me early on that De Avila himself would clam up the minute I mentioned the Brothers Gilberto and Miguel. "He insists he never said those words you've seen on TV," the journalist told me.

De Avila, in the twilight of his career now, has been punished for his tribute to the Cali cartel. At the time of that infamous goal, he was playing for the New York Metrostars in America's Major League Soccer. Shortly afterwards, the team announced tersely they were not taking up the option to extend his contract. De Avila has since joined Barcelona of Ecuador.

Anyway, on a sweltering afternoon in New Haven, Connecticut, to be precise at the Yale Bowl. the crumbling dome where Harvard and Yale have played American football every year since 1914. I finally watch and meet the irrepressible Anthony de Avila. He is clever on the ball, you have to give him that. Colombia are playing Paraguay in a World Cup warm-up and he makes a solid defence look slow and foolish. He gives his full-back a terrible time.

When he is taken off after an hour or so, he retreats quickly to the clubhouse, hidden behind the tennis courts, rather like some Edwardian caricature of the playing fields of Oxford and Cambridge. I ambush him there with my microphone, camera and notebook. To my astonishment, he does not deny anything.

"Why did you dedicate that famous goal of yours to the drug lords?" I ask.

"Because it was the human thing to do," he replies. "I felt the prison sentences they got were a shame, unjust, a shame. I wanted to send them my best wishes, good health."

"But how can a footballer dedicate a goal to drug

That was what I believe is right. And you should respect that." The look in the eye he is giving me is mistakeably defiant. "I did it because I wanted to."

In 1994 Colombia were one of the favourites for the World Cup in America, only to crash in highly dubious defeat to Team USA (the defender who scored an own goal that day. Andres Escobar, was assassinated on his return home to Medellin, fuelling the belief that the team took a dive, all parts of a supposed gambling coup) This time, in contrast, few expect Colombia even to make it out of England's group. This an ageing team, still built around the venerable but increasingly pedestrian Carlos Valderrama in midfield. Faustino Asprilla, latterly of Newcastle, new back at Parma, has been suffering with a knee injury. One kev defender, Wilson Perez of Deportivo Medellin, may simply not be allowed to travel to France after his recent arrest for possession of an undisclosed amount of cocaine in Baranquilla.

There are youngsters coming through, but they hardly express optimism. Alexander Posada, from the Armenian syndicate's team Quindio, is typical. Colombia needs a good World Cup," he says, "to forget about our tragic past. To show the world a different image." Like other home-based players expected to make the squad for France, he hopes the World Cup will earn him a one-way ticket out of the country.

"It's such a waste of great talent, but this team is in no shape to bother England," says Jose-Luis as we end our clandestine session in a coffee shop outside Bogota. "The tragedy is no one thinks any more of playing for La Patria (the country), it's every player for himself. I don't blame any of them, I understand why they behave the way they do. If you'd ever sat down down with Don Miguel, and negotiated a contract, you'd understand too."

In the course of chasing this story, and Anthony de Avila, I find just one player who is optimistic. Yes, of course, it's the man who scored the goal that takes Colombia to France.

"Ready for England?" I ask outside the Yale Bowl. "Sure." De Avila says. "We are ready for anyone and everyone in the World Cup. We are." And he has that look in his eye.

David Smith is Washington Correspondent for Channel Four News



video clip. He dedicates his goal, as if he is inton- Andres Escobar in despair after scoring an own goal for Colombia in the 1994 World Cup. On returning to his home country he was murdered





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Faith healing no match for curse of the referee



GAFFER TAPES

Major weekend

fixtures and

pools check

Leeds v Coventry

Third Division

30 Barrier V National States of Samer V Notes County 32 Continuings Utd v Notes County 33 Colchester v Leyton Orient

Beil's Scottish League Premier Division

40 Celtic y Hibernies 41 Dungee Utd v St Johnstone

IZ Hearts v Re

First Division

Second Division

Third Division

Queen of South y Sparae

TOMORROW

FA Carting Premiership

Nationwide Football League

HONESTLY, I don't know Shui bloke - or was it Ideal what all the first was about. I Home magazine - the visitors' mentioned in my column last dressing-room has been paintweek that Eileen Drewery ed black and has rusting corruwould be in the England team hotel and yet, when Glenn tells nails for clothes hooks on one everybody on Monday the side and soft leather upholmedia go mad. Remember, you read it here first.

I can't understand why everyone was so sceptical either. what's wrong with a faith healer? Anything that might give you an edge is worth trying. We took a white-magic wizard to Anfield with us once, it was an attempt to match the black magic of the Unfortunately, the wiz was thrown out after the security staff caught him trying to douse "magic potion". It turned out it was nothing more than goat's urine - I wouldn't mind but half our team had drunk it as they

It didn't put me off though Thanks to the advice of the Feng and-cye-of-newt pie on the back, they must have gone via were one-down in the last

gated iron benches with rusty stered seats with personal miniwardrobes on the other. The idea is to create disharmony in

the opposition. We've also been using a faith healer, Abbie Cadabra. Shaun Prone's been to see her almost every week and, while she never seems to cure any of his injuries she's done wonders referee who always gave them for his morale, they're engaged a penalty in front of the Kop. to be married in the summer. In view of that, perhaps I ought to get Shann to my another faith healer, you don't want to keep the ref's changing room with a mixing business and pleasure. It could be that Abbie likes him home on Saturdays.

Anyway, I said to Glenn as we went off for dinner at Druids thought it might bring good luck. on Tuesday: "Don't let it worry you." Fortunately he soon and we've had all sorts since. perked up, they had frogspawn-

washed it down with a hottle of Bulls Blood (no. not real bulls' blood - we had that as an aperitif) and he was soon flying press about "needing a win" and on air again.

I wish I was, our results have taken a turn for the worst recently and we're right back in the relegation doglight. I'm not sure if my overpaid millionaires have got the stomach for it, especially as Broccoli Moore and Fritz Unstartz have already negotiated moves to Krak Kontynentles and Real Egotme.

Then there's the Jamaican boys, Delroy Rasta and Leroy Ganja, who seem to be more interested in the World Cup than staying up. At least it's broadening their minds, every week they come back from somewhere outlandish saying: "Gaffer, you wouldn't believe the natives, they're so weird." At least it was only Iran this week, the other month they had to go to Wales, it took them days to get

menu, one of his favourites. We Virgin Rail's Liverpool express service.

Anyway, the chairman's started leaking comments to the highest paid manager in Sludgethorpe" - as if there were any others. I'm beginning to sense my time could be up so I'm trying to bring forward some of my planned summer buys to make sure I get my cut in my hand before I get a knife in the back.

It's not as if our position is my fault. It's all down to the referee who didn't give our goal at Highbury a couple of months ago. Nothing to do with bad team selection, bad coaching, had signings, bad players, bad attitudes, just bad refereeing. And I think I have the support of all my fellow managers in the relegation zone - or anywhere else in the table for that matter - when I blame the ret for anything that has gone wrong this

It is the inconsistency which is the worst thing. Last week we

minute when Leroy played Duane Spice through. He was just about to beat the keeper when the ref pulled nim up for offside. Television cameras proved conclusively that he was only a yard offside and linesmen hardly ever spot that, so why get it right this time. That sort of inconsistency will see me on the dole by the end of May.

Ivor Niggle's out today, he's got repetitive strain injury from calling the World Cup ticket line. but Prone returns. He's just come back from seeing Eileen and she's convinced him he's not been as fit since he was an Etruscan warrior in one of his other lives. Now all we have to do is find his squad shirt and dust the mould off.

18. Applopes to all those who sent in 18. Applopes to all those who sent in 6 World Cup sicket packages. Due to 2 telecommunications problem we may not be able to meet the very high demand. 29 income able, to meet the total at ments a email administrative surcharge - if they can provide proof of purchase and a county coun judgment.

Barry Goffer was talking to

Glenn Moore

SIDELINES

Fabulous Baker buoyed everyone

Dutch goalkeepers will be involved in today's reasons involved in today's meeting of Chelsea and Liverpool.



not to mention David James, of Parisian catwalk fame. For all that, it is a safe bet that none boasts a background quite as exotic or eccentric

as Ben Howard Baker. Born on Merseyside in 1892, Howard Baker's first lovalty was to the great amateur club Corinthians. He also helped out Liverpool, Everton and Chelsea, and kept clean sheets on both his appearances for England. Yet he was even better known as a high jumper, competing in two Olympics and setting a UK record that lasted 25 years, as well as playing lawn tennis and water polo to a high standard.

Howard Baker once scored Chelsea's winner from the spot against Bradford City and thought nothing of venturing upfield in a manner that made Bruce Grobbelaur appear a model of propriety. As he lived to the age of 95, he may have seen Joey Jones do much the same for both Chelsea and Liverpoot, although the marauding Welshman at least had the excuse of being a full-back.
Nigel Spackman and David Speedie have since repre-

sented both clubs, while Bobby Campbell, a Liverpool squad player at the start of Bill Shankly's reign, went on to manage Chelsea for three years from 1988. When Spackman moved from Stamford Bridge to Anfield for £400,000 in 1987, he was following in the footsteps of Tony Hateley 20 years earlier, although the £100,000 centre-forward was not known for using his feet.

> Ten things Chelsea's Uruguayan Gustavo Poyet might be missing today



I A rich history of corned beef. The Liebig Meat Extract Company of London started operations in the town of Fray Bentos in

2 Cheap morino jumpers. Wool is the country's main export product. 3 A parrillada (steak platter) washed down with a

glass of clerico (white wine mixed with fruit juice). 4 Novels such as No Man's Land and A Brief Life. Not accounts of Ruud Gullit's career at Stamford Bridge, but

Carlos Onetti.

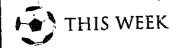
5 Montevideo, the capital. where the 26-storey Palacio Salvo (the country's tallest building) puts the Chelsea hotel in the 6 Mercedes, the livestock

centre and holiday resort. As opposed to the favoured method of transport on the King's Road. 7 The Riviera east of Montevideo, with its scenic coastline and sandy

beaches. 8 Sea-lion colonies. 9 The unifying hybrid language, fronterizo. Useful at the Bridge? renowned works by Juan 10 Week-long carnivals.

NAME OF THE GAME No 32: HAIDUK SPLIT

The club were formed in 1911 by students who brought a football home to the Croatian town of Split after studying in Prague. Unable to agree on a name, they rushed into the office of their college principal to seek his opinion. The principal, unhappy with their unannounced entry, sugnested that as the students had entered his office "like bandits", that was what they should call themselves. "Hajduk" is the local term for bandits.



ON 25 April 1931, attention thrilling incidents of the Cup switched from the race to be final. League champions to the fight for the FA Cup.

Arsenal's 3-1 win over had given them an unassail-(and hence their first title). between Birmingham City and West Bromwich Albion.

listen in to the BBC's over £33,000 in gate money." broadcast description of the game," said one newspaper on the morning of the game.

"And in the evening, talkie film showing the most

"Among the most interested spectators from overseas will be the African Liverpool the previous week chiefs who reached England this week," went on the reable lead in the First Division port, before also emphasising the national importance so all eyes turned to the Cup of the fixture. "Although final contest at Wembley both teams come from the Birmingham district, every district in the country will be "Over 94,000 people will represented among the specwatch, but over 1,000,000 will tators, who will have paid

West Brom, of the Second Division, overcame their First Division opponents 2-1 to take their third FA thousands will see 6.000ft of Cup. They also won promotion the same month.



THE First Division's leading to and relegation from the Preteams will be well aware of miership, while Bone have the struggle that faces them experienced both fates twice. should they win promotion.

ley and Crystal Palace currently occupy the Preplaces, while the Nation-Nottingham Forest, Sunderland and Middlesbrough know through experience how difficult it is to bridge the divisional gap.

Forest and Sunderland have known both promotion

Assuming that this sea-

Last season's three pro- son's bottom three fail to esmoted clubs - Bolton, Barns- cape from the drop zone. only five of the 17 teams promoted to the Premiership miership's three relegation since 1992 will have managed to preserve their position in wide League's leading trio of the top flight: Blackburn Rovers (promoted via the play-offs in 1992). Newcas-(le and West Ham (first and second in 1993), Derby (second in 199n) and Leicester (promoted via the play-offs

Contributors: Phil Snaw, Nick Harris, Paul Newman Readers' contributions welcome. Send to Sidelines, Sports Desk, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL e-mail address: sport @ independent.co.uk

United in FA Carling Premiership hunt for Nationwide Football League Ortega

MANCHESTER UNITED are pursuing the player described as the new Maradona, Argentina's of other players. World Cup play-maker Ariel Ortega. Alex Ferguson sent his assistant Brian Kidd to watch the Valencia player against the Republic of Ireland in midweek.

Ferguson has been on Ortega's trail for weeks since hearing that he is unhappy in Spain. Martin Ferguson, the manager's brother has also been to see Ortega play in Valencia. Ortega will move in the sum-

mer for around £6m but Unit-Reacting 44 II 6 M 39 18 Per ed may step in before the World Second Dwiston Cup imals to secure a deal. The eified 24 year-old No 10 is des-tined to be one of Argentina's key players in the competition and his value could soar. and his value could soar.

Martin Edwards made an inquiry about Alessandro del Piero last week, but Juventus quoted him £25m. The Old Trafford club. even with all its wealth, will not pay those sums. However, Ortega is in their budget.

Orlega joined Valencia from River Plate in Argentina 12 months ago for £8m, but his much heralded arrival turned sour. The skilful play-maker fell out with the coach Claudio Ramieri and has been unable to keep his place in the side.

Terry Venables has set up his first signing for Crystal Palace, Akonnor in a £2m deal. Venables has told the club's prospective owner, Mark Goldberg, to arrange the transfer and German sources revealed last night that they have agreed terms with the midfielder.

Akonnor was due to move from Fortuna Cologne to Gütersloh in the German second division, but Venables has stepped in for the midfielder.

Although Venables has not taken charge of Palace, he is already making plans for next season and has targeted a couple Palace's plans to play in Europe next season have been

scuppered after a Uefa roling cleared the way for Aston Villa to enter the InterToto Cup. Palace had declared an in-

terest in this summer's competition as a route to a Uefa Cup place, but Villa's recent good form has seen them rise to eighth in the Premiership, ensuring them qualification as the highest-placed club. A spokeswoman for Euro-

pean football's governing body yesterday clarified its criterion for qualification: "The English club which will enter the tournament out of any that are interested will be the one finishing highest in the Premier League.

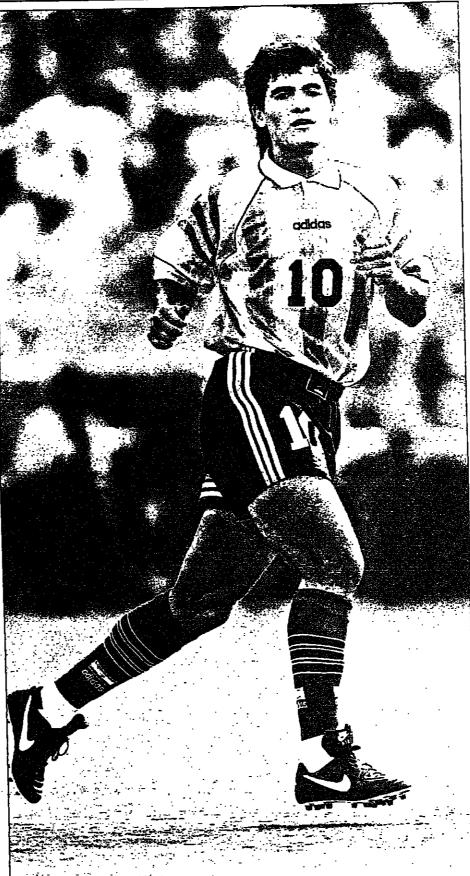
Fifa, the game's world body. is refusing to step into the World Cup ticket row after praising organisers for doing "a tremendous job". The French have responded

to criticism from the European Union over ticket sales by setting up a phone line to sell 110,000 tickets to supporters throughout Europe. A Fifa spokesman insisted:

"I understand some 30m people have been calling in but there are 2.5m tickets available for the World Cup. We'd like to see any the Ghana captain Charles kind of organisation handle 30m fans' calls under any kind of circumstances.

"The French have done a tremendous job in the light of the enormous difficulties, both on the logistical side and bow to balance the distribution." Nottingham Forest are ready

to pay £3.5m for Brondby's international striker Ebbe Sand, the leading scorer in Denmark's top division with 25 goals.



Wanted man: Ariel Ortega, who is a target for Manchester United Photograph: Empics

Kinkladze back in the frame JOE ROYLE has confirmed second automatic promotion me in Paul Merson, the best

that he will turn to Georgi Kin- spot kladze in Manchester City's hour of need. The Maine Road manager, who has shunned the Georgian striker for the last six games claiming transfer talks between City and Ajax over the midfielder had numed his head, will play Kinkladze in today's First Division relegation game with Queen's Park Rangers.

Opting to pick Kinkladze again could be Royle's last option. "I spoke to him on Monday and he said he'd love to play his part in keeping us up and repay the fans for their lovalty," Royle said. "If he is in a positive mood like that he has to be considered."

While City have a fight on their hands to stay in the First Division, the promotion race has six teams battling it out for automatic entry into the Premier League.

With Birmingham City and Wolves realistically out of the picture and Nottingham Forest just one win from an immediate return, the race is on for the The former England in-

ternational, Gary Stevens, has endured the play-off path with Tranmere Rovers where he lost to Reading in May 1995. After playing against all the

Stevens reckons Forest are the best-equipped to win promotion to the Premier League. "Nottingham Forest are easily the favourites. They play the most exciting football and are a massive club," Stevens said.

front runners this season

The striking partnership of Pierre Van Hooijdonk and Kevin Campbell has been on fire and they look a good bet for the Premiership next season." "Sunderland have the best left-sided team in the League.

Michael Gray and Alan Johnston have provided a lot of quality balls for Niall Quinn and Kevin Phillips. They could do it depends who fires on the day.

player in the First Division this year. Add Gazza to the equation and you have a side that should be in the Premiership. However, promotion is no way guaranteed."

We play Charlton on Saturday and are hoping to dent their hopes a little bit. But it says a lot for their team spirit that they're up there. They've got the right blend and have hit good form at exactly the right

"I haven't seen much of Ipswich to be honest but they've put their foot on the pedal at just the right time. The number of goals they have scored is amazing.

"Sheffield United have done some very strange things through the season - from management down to the players who have left. If they were serious about a challenge you in the play-offs, but they've got wouldn't expect them to sell as a lot of hard work to do and it many of their squad as they have this year. Having said that, and "Middlesbrough have an with everything against them, embarrassment of riches and for they're still a strong side."

Jess determined to prove himself worthy of Brown

ing ambition as he prepares to miership future at Kilmarnock

The talented forward is hoping to shake off the calf injury that forced him out of Scotland's midweek friendly with Finland, a I-1 draw, and will want to further his claims by catching Brown's eye in the game at Rugby Park.

Jess was a vital cog in the Dons' impressive 1-0 victory over Rangers last Sunday that lifted Alex Miller's side up to sixth place, their highest position of a troubled season at Pittodrie. But the former Coventry player, who has responded well in the months since Miller's arrival, was upset at comments attributed to him afterwards claiming the win was more important to him than being picked for Scotland.

Jess dismissed the idea that his target of a summer spent

ABERDEEN'S Eoin Jess insists across the Channel has taken that a place in Craig Brown's second billing in his end-of-sea-World Cup 22 remains a burn- son priorities: "My aim has always been first and foremost to help the Dons secure their Pre-perform as well as possible for Aberdeen," he insisted, "Last Sunday's victory was crucial as

> aware that a win will mean we will definitely stay up. 'As far as the World Cup is concerned it is every player's dream to play in the finals and I am no different. But there is no way I would attempt to compare winning any particular game with selection for

it took us away from the dan-

ger area, but tomorrow's game

is equally important as we are

Scotland. Miller is also banking on Stephen Glass recovering from the groin problem that forced his withdrawal from the Scotland B squad which lost 2-1 to Norway B in midweek, with Mike Newell set to continue up front. "If we show the same level of performance as last week then I'm sure we will do well enough," Miller said.

Gunners in mould of past masters



by Ken Jones

新月E 1976 VINTAGE **Bob Wilson**

(42 lge, 9 FAC; Scotland international, 0 caps at time of FA Cup final (won 2 in all). Now ITV presenter and Arsenal goalkeeping coach, Lives in Herts) Chose loctball over a career in teaching. Great passion for the game. No stylist but courage and intelligence

(41 Ige. 9 FAC; N Ireland, 2 (49). Arsenal first team coach. Became Arsenals regular right back in 1970 when Peter Storey was switched to midfield. Reliable rather than

Frank McLintock

(42 Ige. 5 gis; 9 FAC; Scotland 6 (9). TV pundit and An inspirational captain whose career was transformed by a switch from midfield. An outstanding cen-

trai defender who led by example. Peter Simoson (25 lgs: 9 FAC, 1 gl; Uncapped. Runs a haulage com-

Understed defender at a time when England could call on Bobby Moore and Norman Hunter in his position. Good positional sense. Cool and consistent

(40 lige, 9 FAC. England 4 (4). Agent for South American players - he discovered Pacio Wanshope, Lives

Regarded by McLimbook as the games most accomplished covering full-back. Sharp tackler, Quick, enthusiastic and adventurous.

(40 lge, 2gls; 9 FAC, 4gls; England 1 (19), Lives in A much better player than his hard-man image indicated

Charlie George

(17 igs, 5 gis; 7+1 sub FAC, 5 gis; England 0 (1). Match-day hospitality with Arsenal. Lives in London) Gifted if rebellious tootballer who never really fulfilled immense potential. Exquisite touch and Pele-like vision.

George Graham (36+2 sub ige; 11 gls; 6 FAC; Scotland 0 (12). Manager Leeds United. Lives in London and Yorkshire) Hard management style contradicts the laid-back approach that explains the rickname, "Stroller". Deft touch, elegant and intelligent. Majestic heading ability.

George Armstrong (42 Ige, 7 gls; 9 FAC; Uncapped. Arsenal reserve team coach. Lives in Herts) Unstituting commitment is an example to the youngsters he now coaches at Highbury. Industrious, skillful little

winger who could always be refied on to tackle back. John Radford (41 lge, 15 gls: 9 FAC, 2 gls: England 1(2). General manager of Bishop's Stortford, still playing for Old Arsenal. Lives in Herts)

Powerful front-numer whose willingness enabled Arsenal to build attacks with long passes out of defence. Fit, fast, powerful and unselfish. Ray Kennedy

(41 lge, 19 gls; 9 FAC, 2 gls; England 0 (17). Suffers from Parkinson's disease. Lives in Tyne & Wear) The left foot that was employed to such good effect as an Arsenal attacker would prompt transformation to an outstanding midfielder in Liverpoofs colours. Formidable in the air.

(21+2 sub ige, 4 gls; 0+2 sub FAC. 1gl; Uncapped. Salesman. Lives in Devon) Unspectacular but effective midfielder whose goal in the 1971 FA Cup final was one of his most important

Also played: John Roberts (18 Ige); Jon Sammels 13+2 Ige, 1 gl; 5+1 FAC); Sammy Nelson (2+2 Ige); Peter Marinello (1+2 Ige), 2 own goals in Ige.

Highbury's Double-chasers are more exotic than the '71 squad, but Don Howe (left) tells Glenn Moore they've learnt the Arsenal attitude

THE CURRENT team have Dutch, French, Liberian and Austrian influences but, although the most exotic element of their predecessors was Bob McNab's ers were internationals with collection of kipper ties and floral shirts. Arsenal's modern Double-chasers have much in common with the successful vin-

It is not just that Arsenal, who are at Barnsley today, have unexpectedly come from way behind to overhaul the title favourites, nor that their surge involved a number of 1-0 wins, the nature of the teams is also un-

Don Howe was coach to the double winners 28 years ago and is now back at Highbury as head youth coach. He recalled, at Arsenal's London Colney training ground this week: "The teams are similar in composition and tactics. When I watch Marc Overmars I see Geordie Armstrong, while Tony Adams is a terrific captain in the mould of Frank McLintock.

"They both played 4-3-3 with good goalkeepers in Bob Wilson and David Seaman; a back four that was hard to break down; and a good anchor in midfield, Peter Storey and George Graham then, Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira now. The quality of this team is Petit, Vieira and Ray Parlour. The others are all good players but that is the quality of this

It is not just about players. Arsenal has always had a special feel and Howe believes this has transmitted itself to the present team. "It's the spirit of

the place," said Howe, who first 10 more than the current team arrived at Highbury, as a player, 34 years ago this month. "A lot of people are jealous of it, it has a real dogged spirit. No one comes up and says [his voice drops to a heavy whisper] this is The Arsenal, you've got to start winning son', it is something in the atmosphere. It seems to convert people. I sense it with the this thing about the strength of

"Arsene [Wenger] wouldn't They'll argue for years." unis dut de das viru gone the same way as if we'd said this is how we do things at Arsenal - a back four, a winger, two up front'. When he came we'd been playing three at the back and he said 'I'm going to play with a back four'. And everybody thought, 'hang on, here's a bloke from the continent, who we thought would have new ideas, who wants to do what we've always done'. He's done it and it's

all fitted in." Wenger himself has talked at length of the strength of Arsenal's team spirit, much of which he inherited from George Graham who was, himself, heavily influenced by his time under Howe and Bertie Mee in the Doublewinning side.

"That team was born out of failure." Howe said. "We lost to Leeds in the old League Cup in 68 and the following year we lost to Swindon. The effect was positive, they got so frustrated with losing it made them more hungry. Failure hardened them."

The following season Arsenal won their first trophy for 17 years. the Fairs (now Uefa) Cup. They defeated Johan Cruyff's Ajax before overcoming a 3-1 first-leg deficit against Anderlecht in the

But, having finished in the bottom half in the League, they were not fancied for the title. At the season's start only four play-McLintock, with six caps, the most decorated.

But the ingredients were fitted into place. Storey was moved from right-back, where he was replaced by Pat Rice, to midfield; Ray Kennedy came in alongside John Radford and Graham, a former centre-forward, settled to his new position of left-half. "It wasn't planned, it just happened by chance." Howe said . "Bertie tried him and suddenly his career took on a new lease of life."

There were two other incidents that bonded the team; a brawl in Rome when, after a European tie, they were set on by Lazio players at a post-match function; and a 5-0 defeat at

Arsenal were still well behind in February when Charlie George came into the team for Jon Sammels. "He was a skillful, whole-hearted trier," said Howe of Sammels, "but the crowd didn't take to him. We thought he was an outstanding player but it got to him."

Arsenal now won nine games on the trot and, on 20 April. took a clear lead for the first time the current team have won seven on the trot and first led on 18

April. The title was clinched in dramatic style with a 1-0 win at White Hart Lane to beat Leeds on goal average. Five days later they defeated Liverpool in extratime to win the FA Cup. It was their 64th game of the season -

are scheduled to play.

The win was greeted with the headline: "You're bores" but Howe said: "People say boring Arsenal' but it is a load of cobblers, we've always been able to defend well rather than being defensive. Flair? You can't have a better player than Charlie George. Go into a pub around foreign lads, they have absorbed Highbury with fans who go back a few years and say: 'Who's best, Bergkamp, Brady or George?

portant thing was to keep the players fresh. "We went to our doctor. Dr Thomas, and he said: 'Let them have stacks of time away from each other so when they meet up they have something to talk about. Otherwise players get stale, they get fed up with each other'. Arsene's very clever, he's good at psychology, and he's doing similar things.

"Everybody is impressed with the vitality about their play, they look like pre-season. Everybody is saying what are you doing with them, we're knacked and Arsenal are running all over the place'. He's not doing anything. just giving them stacks of rest.

The double is there to be achieved as it was for us. It's like climbing a mountain, you can see the peak but you've got to take it one step at a time and make sure you don't slip.

"I don't think it is any harder now, or any easier, but a lot of people can stop you. I remember with Wimbledon [he was coach to Bobby Gouldlin '88 we got to the final to play Liverpool. Liverpool were going to do the Double and no one gave us a chance, but we beat them." Something for Arsenal and Barnsley to ponder today.



David Seaman (27 Ige; 3 FAC. England, 39 caps)

Commanding goalkeeper at the peak of his form and among best in the world. Coached by Double predecessor Bob Wilson.

(22+2 sub ige; 6 FAC. England, 21) Overlapping right-back with more than 450 appearances for Arsanal. In his benefit season.

Nigel Winterburn (31+1 sub ige, 1 gl; 7 FAC. England, 2) Should make 500th Arsenel appearance before the end of the season. Left-back whose determined attitude compensates for his dependence on left foot. Martin Keown

(14 ige: 6 FAC. England, 16) : Defender in second spell with club and now enjoying benefits of spells in midfield and as specialist man-mark-er, Fans' player of the year last season.

Tony Adams (22 Ige, 2 gls; 5 FAC. England, 50) Club captain for over a decade with more than 500 Arsenal appearances at centre-half. Recovered from gruelling battle with alcoholism and injury. Steve Bould

(20+2 sub ige; 4+1 sub FAC. England, 2) Another in his benefit season. Uncompromising contro-half who, like Adams and Keown, has expanded his game Ray Pariour (30 lge. 5 gls; 6 FAC, 1 gl. Uncapped.)

Right-sided midfielder enjoying best season of career after overcoming predilection for wild living. Currently in England squad awaiting debut. Emmanuel Petit (28 Ige, 1 gl; 6 FAC. France, 18) Versatile left-footed defender or midfielder who has set-tied in front of back four. Good passer and tackler with outside chance of Franch World Cup aquad.

by Glenn Moore Patrick Vieira (27+1 sub ige, 2 gls; 7+1 sub FAC. France; 6) Formed sold central midfield permanship with Petit which is at figer to facing success. Solid lacker and dangerous numer with ball. Back in French team.

Marc Overmars 28 Ige, 9gls; 7+1 sub FAC, 1 gl. Netherlands, 36) Biosporned after slow start to season to show pace and finishing reminiscent of golden days on Alaxwing, Scored crucial goal at Old Traiford.

Dennis Bergkamp (28 lgs; 15 gls; 7 FAC, 3 gls. Netherlands, 57)
PFA Player of the Year whose gittering skills have added extra dimension to Arsenal attack. Poor disciplinary record due to occasional flashes of temper.

Nicholas Anelka (12+9 sub Ige, 6 gls; 7+1 sub FAC, 2 gls, France, 1) Looked out of his depth early in season but has since filled the void left by lan Wright's Injury. Made French

The above 12 have formed the basis of Arsenal's post-Christmas run of success. Also played this season: lan Wright (20+1 ige, 10 gls; 1 FAC) Gilles Grimandi (4+6 ige. 1.g); 3+2 FAC) David Ptatt (9+17 ige. 3 gls; 1+2 FAC) Stephen Hughes (6+10 ige. 2 gls; 3+3 FAC) Alex Manninger (6 lge; 5 FAC) Remi Garde (6+4 lge; 1 FAC) Christopher Wreb (5+6 lge, 3 gls; 1+4 FAC, 1 gl) Matthew Upson (4 ige; 1 FAC) Luis Boa Morte (3+11 ige, 1+3 FAC) Alberto, Mendez (1+1 igs) Paolo Vernazza (1 ige) isaiah Rankin (0+1 ige) Gavin McGowan (0+1 ige) Jason Crowe (0+1 FAC) 1 og in lge

It's a boy! First pick him a name, then you can pick him a team JOY IS, of course, the first re- most devoted fans but their to do well in their exams. Per-

FAN'S EYE VIEW NO 251

THE FOOTBALL DAD STEPHEN SHAW

arrival of an addition to the family, closely followed by relief that your wife is well and the new buby lit and healthy. This time though, there is another dimension. This one is a boy. In just a few short years you will be joining an exclusive brotherhood of impassioned offspring to "get stuck in". fanatics. You will become a football dad.

The baying black and white hordes of Newcastle may contest with their red and blue chester, the title of England's parent who wants his children

action at the eagerly awaited protestations have a hollow ring. In his sheer blind fanatieism, the football dad is out on his own. You will see him squelching on itt-defined muddy touchlines the length and breadth of the country. screeching like a banshee on double time, as he orders his

Conventional wisdom has it that the football dad is intent on succeeding through his son where he failed himself. This is seldom fair or true. Similar rivals in Liverpool and Man- barbs are never hurled at the

haps it's just a matter of primitive emotions, rooted deeply in some residual need for male initiation, being more easily exposed on the football pitch than in the examination hali. I once stepped in to break up a fight between a father and a referee following an incident in which a controversial offside decision had been given against a nine-year-old. One earmot imagine having to perform a similar intervention

between an irate parent and a chief examiner. The heart does go out to the

tragic father who discovers, tute. His father's suggestion do his stints with the sponge through opaque layers of dis- that the team would be imhelief, that his son is not in- proved if Jason moved to centerested in the game. He tre defence and Daniel came doesn't like getting wet or in on the left side of midfield dirty. He cries (oh, the shame of it) when his ankles are the other dads. rapped. He would much prefer

lessons in ballroom dancing. More sad is the case of the boy who is desperately keen. but is nowhere near good enough for the team into which his father is trying to push him. Daniel turns up every week and, if the result is beyond doubt, he comes on for the last. He will help to raise much-

is met by a stony silence from

For all his faults, however, there is much to be said in favour of the football dad. He is the sait-of-the-earth type who will give generously of his time to ferry boys to floodlit training sessions on freezing evenings and weekend matches on frost-bitten wastelands.

and the linesman's flag.

When summer comes, a strange transformation takes place. The Hyde football dad becomes the Jekyll cricket dad. The latter is a different beast. With his fellow fathers he will take a sedate stroll out onto the square, studiously examine the wicket, and exchange thoughtful observations on what it will do. The touchline yawping is replaced with ripples of applause, the hot dogs with elegantly cut sandwiches.

Some cricket dads are too

volvement and are forced to spend their Saturdays wondering which Manchester United replica kit they will wear today. However, the genuine football dad wears the summer's hair-shirt of restrained civility with ill-grace. He can't wait for the days to shorten, the shadows to lengthen and the pitches to soften. Then the well-manicured: "Oh dear, I thought that was rather close," can be replaced by the three minutes as fifth substi- needed cash, put up nets, and cultured to effect the winter tested you stupid, blind git." full-blooded: "Get your eyes

transformation. Perhaps their

sons are denied any active in-





t animal any disthat the npanics in 1981. the rennormaltemper-

DES WETE to insist ures and proach. : was left gestions s had alied to be rive. But gulations

actly the covered

Why Beckham gets a kick out of syntactic foam you've got Stanley Matthews on burn and Arsenal, although it guarantees a "tighter, lighter, gles at the thought of the likes



BLAIR

ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE MATCH-DAY FOOTBALL:

leather footballs that landed you a real thud." regularly on his head throughout his 17-year playing career for Queen's Park, Clyde and

to fame is the unforgettable hat trick of headers he scored for Celtic in their 7-1 drubbing of Rangers in the 1957 Scottish given that the 70-year-old is suffering from chronic memory loss, he's probably forgotten all

McPhail's brain, apparently, has been "half-flattened" by the impact "Sometimes", he

HOW ironic it was that old Bil- says, "the ball came to you like ball, for instance, is apparently McPhail should use the a bullet, and if it was a wet day by far lighter than its predephrase "lone ranger" during his it really soaked up the moiscampaign to blame his pre-se-ture. Today's ball is as light as nile dementia on the old brown a feather, but the old one gave Not every footballer can

blame a lack of brain cells on the ball, but it's certainly not the first time the issue has Because McPhail's claim arisen. Several years ago a report in the New York Times suggested that "all that butting the ball with their heads might make their brains go squishy", League Cup final - although (any wonder that the game struggled to take off in the US?). but there's little chance of that nowadays, not with the heavyweight sports manufacturers vying to create increasingly lightweight balls.

cessors at around 431 grams, and World Cups apart, literally, from the brown plastic Slazenger number with which Bobby Moore and Co tri-

umphed back in 1966.

Essentially, should Glenn Hoddle's men come up trumps in France they will do so with a ball that has been subject to the same rigorous R&D as was the Predator boot: a blue, red and white ball christened the Tricolore, emblazoned with French symbols - a cockerel, a high-speed train and a turbine meant to symbolise history. energy and speed - and made from 32 panels of something tic foam which apparently USA 94. In fact, the mind bog- crossed (which is OK when cent game between Black- to mind. Adidas' official World Cup

highly responsive material". In other words - at least ac-

cording to David Beckham. who is better known for his ability with a football than for his way with words - the Tricolone is "faster, sharper and probably harder to save" than any other ball, while the Italian striker Alessandro Del Piero rather ominously claims it "moves much faster and follows your directions better so you can be more creative and are more likely to score".

Over 3,500 Tricolore balls will be used in France where, with any luck, its "unique properties" will ensure that the standard of free-kicks is sig-

of Roberto Carius and Dennis Bergkamp with a Tricolore at their feet, notwithstanding the fact that Bergkamp is more used to weaving pretty patterns with the Mitre Ultimax ball. which is standard fare in England, while Roberto Carlos' favoured ammunition is Nike's top-of-the-range NK800GEO matchball, popular in the Span-

But for all the advantages of the modern football, the good old leather hall still served its purpose well enough in its day considering the demands placed on it by the likes of Tommy Lawton, who used to insist that the laces should be facing towards goal when the bull was

ish and Italian leagues.

the wing but perhaps not so clever when it's Ruel Fox). But the leather ball began

to get a had press after it burst in successive FA Cup finals, in 1946 and 1947. Aside from the Golden Ball, which was first awarded to the European Footballer of the year (Stanley Matthews) in 1956, the only ball which has truly stood the test of time is the orange ball, which has a special place in the hearts of English football fans.

Like Chris Waddle, it appears only occasionally these days, but still stands out whenever it does. It certainly brought the biggest cheer of the night when it was brought on during the snow at the re-

did so little for Arsenal's firepower that their fans began to chant: "We only score with the white bali" (they were 4-1 up at the time and unable to add to that tally). Perhaps the Tartan Army

should have adopted the chant back in 1961 when Scotland suffered that humiliating 9-3 defeat by England, for they would certainly have been singing from the same hymn sheet as the players. The problem." claimed defender Bobby Shearer, "was that they used an orange ball. Eric Caldow and I were afraid to kick it and Billy McNeil was afraid to touch it." The words "bad". "workman" and "tools" spring



Aston Villa v Bolton

Aston Villa's Stan Collymore is expected to be back on the substi utes' bench today. The 17m striker, who has not started a game ince 3 March, returned to training this week after having 10 days off following a cortisone injection intended to help shake off a groin noblem. Otherwise Villa manager John Gregory is likely to retain he starting line-up that beat Southampton 2-1 last weekend, a reult which gave his team their seventh win in eight Premiership games. Colin Todd hopes that defender Gerry Taggart (who wants to leave he club) will inspire Bolton in their relegation fight. Taggart will be preferred ahead of Chris Fairclough to replace the suspended Andy odd, having spent most of the last six months out of action. Dean foldsworth has a hamstring strain and Arnar Gunnlaugsson is doubtwith a stomach bug. Nathan Blake will be partnered by one of vo loan strikers – Bob Taylor or Gaetano Giallanza. Scott Sellars still out with sciatica, and Robbie Elliott and Mile Whitlow are nissing with long-term injuries. Bolton have won just one of their



Barnsley v Arsenai

st five League games, and last won a League match at Villa in 1955.

amsley captain Neil Redfeam will be fit for today's match. The Tykes'

ading scorer, with 14 goals for the season, suffered a calf-injury this veek but is available to lead the side after shaking off the problem. Midelder Jovo Bosancic and defender Davren Sheridan are also available ifter completing one and iffree-match bans respectively but Chris Moran and Georgi Hristov are still ruled out through suspension. fartin Keown returns after an eye injury to Avsenal's defence but Vay Parlour is suspended. David Platt is the favouritie to replace him

is Arsène Wenger is reductant to switch Marc Overmars from left to ight. Steve Bould is available after suspension but will be on the benchdong with goalkeeper John Lukic (Alex Manninger has flu). There is no place among the substitutes for the Washing although the is fit at a four months out with over parents part of goals and the comparents to play thing the reserves part and the start his comparents to play thing the reserves part and the start his comparents to play thing the reserves part and the start his comparents to play thing the reserves part and the start his comparents to play thing the reserves part and the start his comparents. pack, Gilles Grimandi is fit again and takes over from the injured Remi in an 18 man squad. Arsenal's last and only League point at latiwell came with 1-1 draw in 1902.



Blackburn v Wimbledon Leading scorer

Blacktrum manager Roy Hödgson has four key players suspended gas his team attempt to end the poor run of form that has seen them take just six points from the last 30. Colin Hendry, Jason Wilcox, Garry Flacroft and Billy McKinlay are all banned while Tim Flowers and Callum Davidson are injured, Jeff Kenna and Alan Fettis were injured in midweek internationals for the Republic of Ireland and Northem Ireland respectively and will have late checks. John Filan, out with a broken arm since August, stands by to deputise for Fettis. Winger Damien Duff and defenders Tore Pedersen and Marion Broomes

have all passed fitness checks. Striver Cari Leaburn is likely to neturn to polster Wimbledon's attacking options against Blackburn after missing last weekend's 5-0 drubbing at Arsenal due to a hamstring injury. Nigerian international striker Efan Ekoku icoks likely to miss the match due to a troublesome ankle injury, which has restricted his appearances for Wimbledon this season. Prior to last week's defeat, three of Wimbledon's four previous games were goalless draws. The other was a 1-0 win.



Chelsea v Livepool

Leading scorer

Chelsea's player-manager Gianluca Vialli missed training yesterday with flu but is expected to have recovered in time to consider himself for selection this afternoon. Chelsea, who could move above Liverpool into third place with a victory, are definitely without Celestine Babayaro (toe), Bernard Lambourde (ankle) and Frank Sin-

clair (groin). Vialli has made a host of changes in the previous few Premiership matches and assistant manager Graham Rix gave no clues yesterday as to who would feature at Stamford Bridge. Michael Owen will mass playing for Liverpool due to suspension. Also definitely out of contention are the injured duo Jamie Redknapp and Steve Harkness, while manager Roy Evans will arrange late fitness tests for Paul Ince, Steve McManaman, Dominic Matteo and David Thompson, Norwegians Oyvind Leonhardsen and Stig Inge Bjornebye were the last of Liverpoofs international players to report back from midweek duties. They both reported for training yesterday unscathed. Liverpool have won two and drawn three of their last five games. Chelses have won four from the last five in all competitions.



Everton v Sheff Wed

Everton's Nick Barmby returns from suspension today and captain Duncan Ferguson should have recovered from flu; while youngsters Michael Ball and Danny Cadamarten return from England Under-18 duty in France. Goalkeeper Thomas Myrtie has come back from international duty for Norway in Denmark having won his first full cap, but John Spencer and John O'Kane are both banned. Everton will guarantee their Premiership safety today if they collect three

points and both Bolton and Barnsley fail to win. Sherfield Wednesday manager Ron Atkinson faces selection problems, l'alian striker Benito Carbone, defender Dejan Stefanovic and former Evertonian Earl Barrett are all suspended, while Norway international Petter Rudi is out for the last few matches of the season due to a persistent thigh injury. Midfielder Scott Oakes is definitely "out, after infuriating Atkinson by not having his shirt on when asked to take to the pitch as a substitute in last week's deleat at Chelsea Alan Quinn could deputise after joining Wednesday four months ago from Dublin amateur side Cherry Orchard.

...And statistics

How United have tumbled from the top



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United held a 12-point lead over Arsenal and the Premiership was being written off as a one-horse race. As the field now head for the finishing straight the Gunners have a one-point lead and, with two games in hand, they look set to bring the championship back to Highbury. It has taken Arsene Wenger's team of

to make up the ground on United. An analysis of the two teams' form this season st Arsenal have won twice as many games as United by t The London side have recorded six 1-0 wins compared

Yet it would be wrong to paint Arsenal as a team who have ground out their results. The two teams' goal totals are similar - United have scored four more but have played two more games - and Arsenal have scored three goals or more on 11 occasions compared with

United's seven. Early in the season Arsenal were relying on more experienced ntayers and their team's average age was two years older than United's. Yet thanks to the presence of youngsters like Nicolas Aneika and Matthew Upson, Arsenal's latest team were actually younger than

Curiously, only two teams in the Premiership have failed to take

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shows that the only goal.		v Crys	stal Palace (2) v Leeds (h)	36	v Liverpool (2	a)
ed to United's	Statistics, Stran Sears		y Barnsley (a)	38	v Aston Vitla	(8)

any points off the top two. Wimbledon lost all four of their games against them and conceded 13 goals in the process. Barnsley still have to play both teams at home, but lost 7-0 at Old Trafford and 5-0 at

One area in which United retain superiority is in their drawing power. At home there is no contest as Old Trafford's capacity is 17,000 more than Highbury's. Yet even away from home United are the bigger draw. Only at White Hart Lane have Arsenal drawn a bigger crowd than the champions - and even that was because Tottenham's capacity had increased by the time Arsenal played them.

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: HOW THEY STAND

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Leeds v Coventry

Leeds manager George Graham has virtually a full squad to choose from for today's game. Other than long-term injury victims. Lee Sharpe and Bruno Ribeiro, who underwent an operation this week for a groin injury, Graham only has defender Lucas Radebe and midfielder Alan I-laybury not in contention. Both face one-match suspensions. with Radebe out following his sending-off at Everton two weeks ago. and Maybury for collecting five bookings. Leeds, who have won three of their last five League games, would virtually guarantee European football for themselves next season with a win today.

Coventry's Viorel Moldovan and Simon Haworth, scorers in midweek internationals, have failed to win places in their club side today Dion Dublin and Darren Huckerby are the first choice stollers. and Moldovan, who scored for Romania against Belgium and Haworth, who scored for Wales under-21 against Italy, will be on the substitutes' bench at Elland Road. Coventry have lost one game in their last 15 in all competitions, and although Uefa Cup qualification is unlikely, a win today would keep it a mathematical possibility.

Tottenham v Newcastle

Leading scorer Shearer, Barnes 7 Last season: 1-2

Tottenham's reserve goalkeeper Simon Brown has been drafted into the squad for today to help solve an injury worry for coach Christian Gross, Both Frode Grodas and Espen Baardsen were injured while on international duty for Norway this week. Baardsen is out with a broken nose, while Grodas has an ankle problem. Brown may be on the bench. All Tottenham's other international players have returned to White Hart Lane unscathed, giving Gross a near fullstrength squad to choose from. Spurs, who have drawn three of their last five games 1-1, while winning one and losing one, are still not clear of the relegation zone and may drop into it if defeated. Newcastle manager Kenny Dalglish has only one new injury worry going into today's game. The Magpies captain Rob Lee is doubtful after returning to the north-east from international duty with a leg injury and although it is responding to treatment, he is unlikely to be fit enough to face Spurs. Central defender Darren Peacock, who has been out for several weeks with a calf injury, will definitely miss the game.

West Ham v Southampton



Paul Kitson returns to the West Ham squad for the first time since 7 February, when he suffered a recurrence of a season-long groin problem. He is likely to be on the bench today with Ivory Coast born striker Samassi Abou favounte to partner Trevor Sinclair up front in the absence of the suspended John Hartson, who misses the rest of this season and the first match of next season, John Moncur is still missing with an ankle problem but Scott Mean returns to the squad after sustaining a knock on his knee last week. Sinclair is fully fit despite coming off at half-time for England B on Tuesday. Tim Bread er is running again but is not yet ready to play.

Claus Lundel vam is likely to return for Southampton. The Norwegan missed last weekend's 2-1 home defeat against Aston Villa with a one-match ban but he is likely to replace Richard Dryden, who is struggling to recover from a nb injury. England under 21 striker kevin Davies is still cut with a knee injury, but David Hughes (calf.) may recover, England B's midweek hat-trick scorer Matt Le Tissier is likely to start in a free role behind David Hirst and Egil Ostenstad.

TOMORROW

Derby v Leicester Leading score

Derby have injury and illness womes to deal with ahead of tomorrow's Midlands derby, Italian international Stefano Eranio is definitely out but Danish defender Jacob Laursen could return after missing three games with a linee injury. Captain Igor Stimac has a sore throat but is expected to be fit and striker Dean Sturndge is fillely to be recalled to the starting line-up. Jim Smith, still hoping his side can qualify for a Uefa cup place, said yesterday: "We have let ourselves down a bit of late. Six games ago, we had the chance to make this a very. very good season but if we don't get these next four results right. it will only be an ordinary one."

Leicester's Northern Ireland international Neil Lennon returns from a one-game ban to play Lennon replaces Garry Parker in midfield with the former Aston Villa man dropping down to the bench if he recovers from a groin strain. Leicester manager Martin Criticillis otherwise expected to stick with the side that drew with 1-1 Everton at Goodison Park last week. Leicester will lose all but the simmest of Uefa cup chances without a win tornorrow.

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Spurs hoping to end the nightmare

By Trevor Haylett

THE nightmare scenario haunting the patrons of White Hart Lane has Arsenal winning the Premiership and FA Cup double. Chelsea adding the Cup-Winners' Cup to the Coca-Cola Cup, and West Ham qualifving for Europe.

Add Tottenham's relegation

A point retrieved with 10 men at Barnsley last weekend ings. has provided Spurs with the impetus to escape that particular Barnsley and Bolton both lose, capital configuration, though

rives this afternoon with the vis-

Kenny Dalglish's strugglers are three points better off and have a game in hand, but are not yet out of the woods themselves.

In seasons gone by, this meeting of north and south has proved marvellously entertaining, but do not expect anything but a tight, tense affair today with both sides desperto that little lot and the cock- are to ensure that a disaperel would be very sickly indeed. pointing League season does not suffer the worse of all end-

> If they avoid defeat and then Newcastle's Premiership substitution last week and the of the season there will be

can start looking forward to the man. FA Cup final.

Those results would also enable Everton to cast off their own relegation cares if they dispose of Sheffield Wednesday at Goodison.

The likely presence of three former St James' Park stars and Ruel Fox - among the Spurs' ranks lends an added dimension to the White Hart Lane fixture. Christian Gross must weigh up whether the more positive force than Jürgen Klinsmann's response to his

Having failed to beat a depleted Spurs, how can Barnsley hope to stall the Arsenal bandwagon. They are clutching at the "they've got to lose some time and why not at Oakwell?" straw and believe the result is by no means a fore-David Ginola. Les Ferdinand gone conclusion even though Arsenal are unbeaten in 13 League outings.

If we put one over them it makes out position better and at the same time gives us a claim power of the "ex" will prove a to a great scalp." the Barnsley coach, Eric Winstanley, said. "I'm sure that before the end

An Arsenal victory followed by another on Wednesday at Derby would leave Arsène Wenger's side needing only to beat Everton at home one week from now to deny Manchester United a third successive crown - no matter what United do in their three remaining fixtures, starting on Monday at Selhurst Park where Crystal Palace have just dis-

covered how to win. Wenger is worried that the demands on his players during international week may have disrupted their renowned concentration. "Barnsley are playing to motion campaign.

another crunch collision ar- place will be assured and they omens do not favour the Ger- twists and turns at both ends of survive and we are playing to win the League, so this will be a very tough game for us," he said.

It was this weekend 12 months ago that Barnsley secured their place among the effice for the first time in the club's history. Whatever is to be their fate - and with Manchester United due in South Yorkshire on the season's final day, survival remains a long shot - they have enjoyed the journey and will be all the stronger for the experience. As both Bolton and Palace have proved in recent years - and Nottingham Forest are proving this time round - relegation can merely be the prelude to a pro-

danger of dropping into the fixtures this long weekend. Bolton go to Aston Villa; who have won their last five games and still harbour hopes of a return to Uefa Cup action in the autumn. After two crushing blows to their morale, Colin Todd, the Wanderers' manager, approaching his second

"All we can do is hope that the result we want and that oth- a thrilling FA Cup-tie 4-2. ers have gone our way. We

peat of our performance at First Division have comforting Derby a fortnight ago when we were diabolical."

Liverpool go to Chelsea to defend their claim on third place and maybe forced tofield Patrik Berger and Danny Murphy as attackers with Michael Owen's suspension adding to the injuries which rule out Robbie Fowler and Karl-Heinz Riedle. The visitors will Premiership fall in three seanot feel secure even if they are sons, sounds somewhat less bullish than he did two weeks 2-0 ahead at half-time, the score the last time the sides met at Stamford Bridge with the at 4.45pm on Saturday we've got London club eventually winning

More football, pages 22-25

Pressure mounts as Hill fails to perform

Motor racing By Derick Allsop

FAMILIARITY is breeding consternation, if not exactly contempt, in the troubled world of Damon Hill.

Seeing McLaren reassert perform as you can." themselves at the front and a bunch of other cars ahead of him for the former world champion. Losing out to his team-mate. places was much worse still.

gen camp and loading the guns of those who have long dared to take a pop at his talent or, more recently, challenge his motivation.

Hill, ninth in practice yesterday, has been out qualified by Schumacher for all three previous races, and has yet to register a point. He has, however, managed to bring the car home each time, while his partner has failed to complete a race. That is scunt consolation for Hill and Jordan, and the 37-year old will he expected to improve his performance in qualifying today. and again in the contest proper when they line up for tomorrow's San Marino Grand Prix.

Hill had that spelled out to

No. 3594, Saturday 25 April

Friday's solution

him by Jordan's technical director, Gary Anderson, before

Damon he owes it to himself, his fans and everyone to show his true ability. It's not about mon-

not, as yet, feel the need to adhere vesterday was bad enough monish Hill, as Arrows Tom Walkinshaw did. midway through an undistinguished Ralf Schumacher, by three campaign, last year, Jordan said: "Damon's got to be ask-Hill's inability to match the ing himself: 'How can I let a 22pace of the 22-year-old German year-old blow me off?" I would is causing ever more evident expect Damon to be quicker than Ralf, based on his experience, knowledge of the circuits

continued to out-qualify Damon and get it together in the races. running ahead of Damon continually, I would want to know why. But the fact is that so far

he can show his true ability. That's my problem and my job.

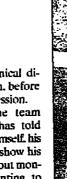
Damon's got to do better and so have we. We've got to give him a better car and there's no doubt he can help make the

yesterday's practice session. Eddie Jordan, the team

owner, said: "Gary has told ey, this is about wanting to

he has not done so.

car better. It's not a question of



"If it became obvious Ralf

conjure up whatever they want. Damon needs things around him to be in good shape before

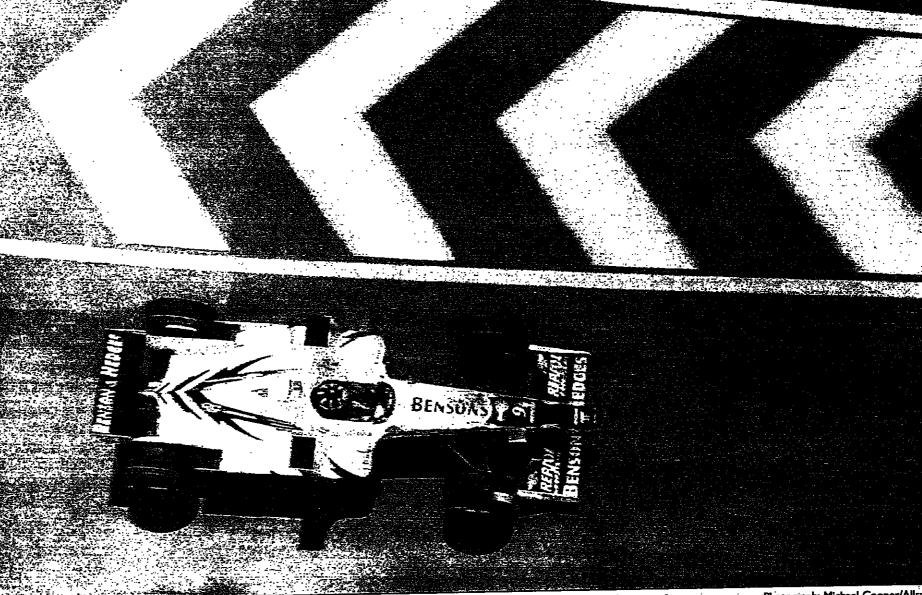
Last Saturday's solution

and setting up cars.

"I'm sure Damon's critics have enough ammunition to

Jordan maintained he does





practice for the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola yesterday Go faster stripes: Damon Hill puts his Jordan through its paces during

- Photograph: Michael Cooper/Allsport

issue has arisen yet, but from here on in I expect a significant improvement.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

avoiding the issue because no for his young team-mate. He for me. His pace is not in ques-

Damon has certainly fired up Ralf and they get on extremely well. But I have no doubt Raif's brother Michael is telling him not to let Damon out-qualify him."

Hill acknowledges he has to raise his game and that he has developed a healthy respect

Pembroke man's uncom- 2

monly guarded nature

trouble for murder (9)

Late piece of music Di-

rector General brought

12 Fellow in platoon is out of condition (5)

13 Quick at crosswords, by

the sound of it? (9) England opener held in gully, out, bagging duck -

16 Discriminating type fea-tured in film by York-

Agrees conservation

21 Latin word several inter-

23 Councillor involved in

sistance is clean (5)

Milk producer from

Type of lens used with

Distinctive design and

paintwork of 19th centu-

Huddersfield (5)

ox camera? (9)

ry Morris? (435)

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preted as 'repulsive' (9)

provision of financial as-

body's circumscribed by

shire Water (7)

idiots (?) 20 He's one of the doubt-

fuls (7)

traditional feature (4.3)

Priest meeting inmate in

said: "I am surprised I've been behind Ralf in the three qualifying sessions so far and I wouldn't want that to continue

Ralf has impressed me. 1 had heard all sorts of rumours and reports about him before I joined the team but I was determined to take as I found and he's a very good team-mate. He's very quick and a challenge

Grooming aids North

court about 501 (5)

ish fillies (4-5) Decree made by English

politic (7)

American used on skit-

Bars can be irritating (7)

Film produced by expert

about the French body

Central character in court's given evidence

somehow designed to

Start tapping haunting rhythm of blues beat (5)

Establishment where

Volume constantly

turned up? (9,4)

15 Realising US stock, is

17 Tutors met in a huddle

19 Cut, as one does in a

20 Resin man will put in

22 Turn over cleared land

23 Old photo showing de-

from which tree's re-

tective's a prey to drink?

0 20 8

bridge ensemble! (7)

ment? (6.7)

of brass (9)

degree (9)

moved (5)

The first five correct colutions to this week's puzzie opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword. P. O. Box 4018, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, Lorendon E14581. Please use the bux number and postende and give your own postanda. Last week's winners: M Thompson. Leicester; S Moulds, Halifax; M Ball, Newcastle; G Ovendale, Chessington; K Ward, Quorn.

you'd expect fair treat-

very keen to pocket a bit

to determine the highest

shatter illusions (9)

tion and that's good for me. He's one of the good young upand-coming drivers and I need that spur. Your spirits are lifted when you're running at the front because victory is in your grasp. You can't manufacture

that motivation. "But I don't see the motivation as a problem and I'm not have improvements coming. A realistic target for us is to have a couple of podium visits and qualify both cars in the top six. but I don't expect that until around the French and British grands prix."

Mika Hakkinen, the winner of the first two races and the

championship leader, dominated proceedings vesterday and completed practice three tenths of a second quicker than his McLaren-Mercedes teammate, David Coulthard.

 Michael Schumacher, who won in Argentina a fortnight ago, was a slightly disappointed third in his Ferrari. Jacques Villeneuve, in a Williams, was worried because we know we fourth, Eddie Irvine, in the other Ferrari, seventh, and Johnny Herbert, of Sauber,

INSIDE 13 pages of sport begin on page 14

Colombia: a World Cup nation in the grip of the drugs lords - Page 22

London: a city taken over by the marathon men and women - Page 14

Seven Sisters: a Welsh mining village facing their toughest challenge - Page 15

ON MONDAY 24-page sports section

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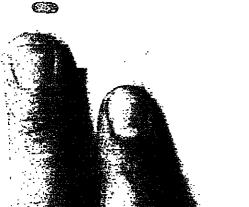
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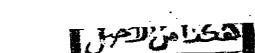
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MOUR MONEY

Personal finance, motoring and property

Saturday 25 April 1998

Harvest the rewards of loyalty

Finishing a weekend's shop with more spending power thanyou started with. sounds impossible. But, as Paul Slade finds, it can be done

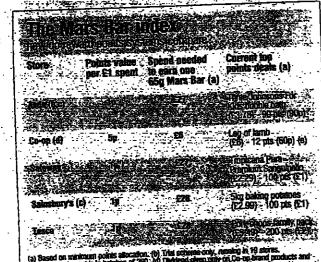
In the war between the supermarkets, loyalty cards are an inportant weapon. The cards not only reward loyal shoppers with points to be redeemed against future bills, but allow the stores to gather valuable information to help them sell us as much stuff as possible. Even Asda, which has until now resisted loyalty cards, has a trial? scheme under way.

Each store is constantly battling to overtake its rivals. Safeway launched an assault last week, when it announced that ABC cardholders spending £240 or more a month will qualify for triple points from May onwards.

This creates a bizarre situation, allowing canny customers to make a profit when buying certain items. Safeway's scheme means anyone who spends £240 or more at a Safeway store one month qualifies for triple points on everything they buy the following month. All the money you have spent since 1 April counts towards this month's total. Each point is worth in.-

One of the best standard rate offers Safeway has at the moment - which will last till 24 May - is a \$12.99 video which give you 1,000 points. The videos on offer are The Francish

next time you are in Saleway and if necessary, top it up to of those points to buy two more reach the £240 mark. You can videos, and your points total will All you have to do, then, is then go back in May, check your total April spend £12.99 video, and earn £30



worth of points. Use £26 worth th £64. You've only spent £12.99 in cash, but that money has bought you three videos and £64 worth of free groceries later in the month - plus the points that go with them.

It sounds too good to be true. But Safeway's product marketing controller Mark Trinder confirms that it works. "If customers are spending the money, they're earning the points," he says. "If you redeem for a product, you'll get points on that product again.

"Suppliers are involved in these product deals, so there's part funding there, as you'd expect. As long as they're getting volume movement through, those guys are happy. This is a big change for the loyalty market, and it will be interesting to see the response."

which give enough points to outstrip their retail price when trebled up. -

This is not just theory. A few years ago, Worcester scientist Phil Calcott noticed that his local Tesco was offering 25 loyalty points worth £1.25 - on a 3lb bunch of bananas costing £1.17. Mr Calcott bought some 3,000 bananas, spending £367 to win points worth £392, leaving himself £25 better off in the

Tesco put its foot down at this point, limiting future banana sales to one case per customer. Mr Calcott gave the bananas away to a local homeless hostel, a nearby school, friends, neighbours and passers-by. "I had a marvellous time," he told reporters, and jokingly added that he hoped

Even when the videos offers Tesco would do the same thing the store's trial branches, and has closed, there will be other to pineapples next, as he was you will get 1p from Goldfish products in Safeway stores particularly partial to the fruit. and 1p from Asda for every £1 Tesco promptly seen him a you spend.

All the supermarkets have avariety of bonus schemes giving you extra points on some of the things they sell. But the standard rates at which they give points varies a lot. Accumulating enough points to buy a 65g Mars bar could mean spending as much as £28 or as little as £6, depending on where you shop (see table). Another way to make the

most of your points is through a practice called "double

The Goldfish credit card, for example, gives shoppers an Asda, Boots or Marks & Spencer voucher for every £1 they spend on the card. Use your Goldfish card to pay for your Asda shopping in one of No surrender

More than 60,000 people will this year lose almost £1,500 each on average by surrendering with-profits endowments to the life company that sold them.

With-profits endowments, typically taken out as part of a mortgage, are often surrendered after 10-15 years, by which time the original policyholder will have paid heavy setting-up charges. By surrendering before maturity in 25 years' time, they risk losing a large slice of any final payment.

The loss, a total of £90m. could be stemmed by selling the policy to market-makers firms which then sell them on to new investors, claims Beale Dobie, one such firm.

False savings

The Government's claims to have saved £5bn by scrapping tax credits on dividends in last July's Budget were attacked this week by the National Association of Pension Funds. The NAPF claimed at least £1.25bn a year will have to be found to rectify unforeseen financial problems caused in other pensions areas. Comment, page 2

Master class

Old Masters are commonly perceived as paintings, but the term applies equally to sculptures. Like paintings, sculptures are collectable. Unlike them, they are eminently tactile, as John Windsor reports. Page 3

Petite crime

Fagan is alive and well, according to crime prevention officers. They claim children, some as young as five, are being used to break into properties. However, a few simple measures can minimise the risk of a pint-sized thief getting in, as Robert Liebman reports. Page 12

FINANCIAL FUND & PEP

Cash in your assets on retirement

Do you feel like a headless chicken? On Equity-release plans are worth another look, despite days when you're running around here, there and everywhere, holding down a job and trying to have a life as well, retirement can seem like light at the end

Finally, you'll be able to take it easy and do all the things you've always wanted to do. But one thing you can't do in retirement is overtime so, if you find you need extra income, then you will have to look to your assets to pro-

Your biggest asset may well be your home. There are financial products on the market designed to give you an income in return for part or all of the value of your house when you die. These. are called home-reversion plans, mortgage home-income plans or equity-

release schemes. Home-income plans (HIPs) got a bad name in the late Eighties. House prices were buoyant and large mortgages were raised. Money borrowed was used to make investments which were supposed to cover mortgage-interest payments and provide the borrower with an income. But when interest rates shot up, and investments performed pitifully, some unfortunate elderly people holding the plans found themselves in danger of losing their homes.

Cecil Hinton, founder of independent. financial advisers Hinton & Wild, which sells home moome plans, blames the disaster on "cowboys" who started selling schemes with no guarantees, which 230,000, because a special mortgage-in-

their bad press in the 1980s. Rachel Fixsen reports

of insurance bonds. "If you're dealing with elderly peo-

ple, it has got to be safe," he says. "You have got to have guarantees." Mr Hinton is secretary of the Ship

scheme (Safe Home Income Plans), which was formed in 1991 and aims to protect clients from 1980s-style fiascos. Providers who belong to Ship adhere to a code of practice guaranteeing planholders the right to live in the property for life and the freedom to move house. Under the Ship code, a solicitor has to explain the plan to the client. Most plans are based on one of two

basic types: Home Reversion Plans: You sell a proportion or all of your house to the financial services provider, but are allowed to live in your home for a token rent (£12 a year with Stalwart Assurance's plan). In return, you receive a homp sum or an annuity. You usually have to be at least 65 to enter the plan. Mortgage Home Income Plans: You take out a fixed-rate, interest-only mortgage on your home. The proceeds of that go to buy an annuity which is enough to meet the interest payments and give you an income. When you die, the lender is repaid from the house sale proceeds. This plan is usually limited to

relied on continued strong performance terest tax relief (Miras) concession is only effective up to that level. Unless you are older than 70, you are unlikely to get a good rate from an annuity.

Another option is a shared appreciation mortgage. These allow you to take advantage of the increase in your property's value. You take out an interestonly mortgage on part of your property. The rate may be zero or a low fixed one. When the property is sold, the proceeds are used to repay the loan, and pay a proportion of the increase in value to the lender. Meanwhile, you have the use

of the sum borrowed. Bank of Scotland offers shared appreciation mortgages and Barclays Mortgages is due to start shortly. Age is not a factor with these schemes.

It is not just the childless who might be drawn to the idea of a home income plan. William Townsend, 76, and his wife have three daughters. But the Mr Townsend says he was not worried about them financially, since they are all married and very well off.

He took out a home reversion income plan with Stalwart Assurance two years ago. "We weren't poor ... it was just the case that now and then something happened and we had to do something about it," Mr Townsend said. The couple's house near Cardiff was then valued at around £52,000, and they cur-

rently receive a monthly income of £170. That amount fluctuates according to the latest property valuation.

Home income plans can be useful, but they are often a last resort. "Having assets to transfer to their children is a key concern for all elderly people," says Andrew Swallow, an independent financial adviser. And these plans can be very expensive when you see the scheme as a whole. He suggests an interest-free loan from their children might be a better solution for retired parents.

Once your home is locked away in the scheme, you are duty bound to keep it in reasonable order. "If they send a surveyor around, and he says the roof needs doing, then the roof needs doing," says Mr Swallow. There are many vital questions to ask

about any equity-release scheme. Would increased private income affect any state benefits you receive? Will you have security of tenure for life? What if you want to move house? Who benefits from any appreciation in the value of the property? "Never look at an HIP in isolation,"

says Philippa Gee of financial advisers Gee & Company. "Take account of all affairs and get both financial and legal advice first."

Gee & Company: 01743 236982; Andrew Swallow Professional Financial Planning: 01473 252156; Stahvart Assurance: 01306 876581; Bank of Scotland: 0131 317 6827; Hinton & Wild: 0181-390 8166.

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Going bananas: Phil

Calcott netted

a £25 profit and

a free case of

3,000 bananas

loyalty card

through Tesco's

Photograph: Martin Humbie

pineapples

Sainsbury's has a similar

scheme which doubles the

points on offer for anyone pay-

ing with a Sainsbury's Bank Visa

card. Reward points on credit

cards should be treated with

caution, however, unless you

plan to pay off what you owe

before the end of the interest-

free period. Often, the cards

with the best reward schemes

also charge the highest interest.

Brown's pension plans fail to add up

NIC CICUTTI

personal finance editors can achieve for their readers. This chastening reflection came to me as I read a report by the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) this week on the savings the Government hopes to make by scrapping tax credits on dividends.

Assiduous readers will remember that this particular piece of financial jiggerypokery was announced by Gordon Brown in his July Budget last year. The Treasury calculated that, by means of this tax adjustment. it expected to save the Exchequer some £5bn a year.

This change meant that millions of people with a personal pension would have to pay an extra 0.8 per cent of their annual salary, on avgrage, to achieve the income in retirement they had previously expected to get. The same applied also to money-purchase occupational pension schemes. where contributions are into buy an annual income in retirement.

We argued in these pages that the Government's decision was an unfair attack on some types of pensions. It would also have the effect of spurring employers with socalled final-salary schemes. where they guarantee a pension based on years of service, to abandon such excellent schemes in search of cheaper options.

But, hey, it's hard to argue when Mr Brown, the kiddies' best friend (who ever thought of that pre-Budget picture opportunity?), tells you he's going to use the extra £5bn for good works.

Except that he won't be clawing back that much at all.

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Grand Program

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There are limits to what as the NAPF points out. Shortly after the July announcement, it was realised that scrapping the tax credits meant the "bribes" paid for people to opt out of Serps. the Government's own earnings-related pension scheme. were not enough.

If left as they were, this risked hundreds of thousands of people flooding back into Serps, with dire consequences for the Exchequer. The increased rebate to people who stay out of Serps will now cost an extra Elba.

Then, local government employers chimed in. They too have to guarantee their staffs' final-salary pensions. Unless they get more money. estimated at about £250m a year, they will have to push up our council tax.

It is not yet clear who else is in line with the begging bowl. What is certain is the claimed 15bn tax saving is unlikely ever to materialise.

There are several morals to this story. The first is vested in a fund which is used that this Government can't do its sums properly. The second is that it is only forced to backtrack when faced by public revolt.

Compare and contrast its attitude on this issue with the sharp U-turn it performed over its plans to withdraw tax benefits for PEPs from April 1999, when new-style Individual Savings Accounts come in. Then, a middle-class backlash materialised within days and Gordon caved in.

Finally, it shows up how ineffective the personal finance press can be at times. On this issue, which will cost as many people just as dearly in the long run, the Government has got away with it. For that, I'm sorry,

MONEY MAKEOVER

Taking stock of investment objectives

Camus

Ages: 54 and 57 respectively Occupations: Programmer and part-

time reacher respectively The Problem: The couple have two simple aims, to fund the college education of their two younger children and to make final preparations for a comfortable retirement. However, they admit their present income just about covers expenditure and they are not saving at present.

The Solution: Given that there is little potential to make further savings, the important thing to do is to look at the Camus' current portfolio, check how this matches with their current objectives and see whether any changes are necessary.

Joanna and Jean-Jacques own their home, presently valued at £250,000, outright. Among their investments is £20,000 in index-linked National Savings certificates, maturing in 2000

They also have £9,000 in a Market Harborough "feeder account" which earns them interest while gradually being invested up to the annual limit into a tax-exempt special savings account (Tessa) with the building society. This matures in 2002. The couple invested £6.000 into Virgin's "tracker" fund personal equity plan (PEP), which tracks UK's All Share index, in each of the past three tax years. They also have £5.000 in a Britannia Guaranteed Equity Bond, maturing in 2000, plus £9,000 in a Cheltenham & Gloucester postal account. All these invest-

ments are in Joanna's name. The couple have three children, of other two. Josephine and Bernard, will be going to college in due course. The Camus' want to fund this without denting their retirement pot too badly:

Names: Joanna and Jean-Jacques contributes 15 per cent of her income into her scheme.

The adviser: Justin Modray, independent financial adviser, Chase de vere investments, with offices in London, Bath and Leeds, 01225 469371. The advice: The Camus' have made a good job of organising their finances to date, making good use of tax officient investments. There are one or two changes that might be advisable.

Cheltenham & Gioucester's postal account currently pays 5.1 per cent gross for instant access. Joanna could consider C&G's 30-day notice postal account, which pays 6.15 per cent gross. To retain direct access, she should consider a transfer to Northern Rock's Save Direct account, with an interest rate currently of 7.8 per cent gross. Longer-term investment is not an option since money is partly earmarked as a gift to Dominic later this year to help with a property purchase.

Market Harborough's Tessa is paying 7.75 per cent gross, which is very competitive, and there is no need to consider switching this investment. National Savings' index-linked certificates are an excellent, no-risk investment. providing tax-free returns over a fiveyear period over and above inflation.

Again, this does not warrant a switch. The position changes slightly in relation to Joanna's Virgin Growth PEPs, which will have performed very well in the time each investment was made, as the UK stock market has prospered over this time. However, we are a little concerned at the lack of diversity within the PEP portfolio, which leaves Joanna somewhat exposed to general UK stock market volatility.

In order to provide a more balanced approach, Joanna may consider whom one, Dominic, is married. The mixing her existing index funds with actively managed funds. There would then be potential to invest further afield, such as Europe, and to consider corporate-bond PEPs, which are genboth of them have past membership erally lower risk than equities. A corof occupational schemes. Joanna porate bond PEP is available through years. Our only reservation is that it lowable contributions into her occu- estate to the children upon first death-



Joanna Camus needs to diversify her PEPs Photograph: Grant Norman

Virgin, although it does not offer actively managed equity funds.

While there are no charges to exit the Virgin PEP, Joanna would need to consider potential initial charges were she to switch to another PEP manager.

The Britannia investment provides capital security with returns linked to the FTSE 100 performance over five

again relies upon FTSE 100 share index's performance. This is similar to her PEP portfolio, where most of the All-Share weighting is linked to the top 100 companies, thus lacking diversity within the portfolio. The investment should, however, be held for the full term due to penalties for exiting.

Joanna is sensibly maximising al-

pational pension, so there is no scope for further contributions. She is contemplating the transfer of an earlier retirement annuity contract into the occupational scheme. This will require expert advice to ensure that she makes the correct decision.

Jean-Jacques has some pension provision from previous membership of the same scheme as Joanna's and. as a self-employed person, has scope to make contributions via a personal pension. However, this is not viable due to lack of surplus income.

The Camus' aim is to fund college for their children. Given that there is no surplus income, in addition to any grants received, funding will need to come from existing investments.

In the shorter term, they could draw upon any surplus building society holdings. They could then look towards their maturing National Savings, Tessa and GEB in the year 2000. At maturity, appropriate sums could be held in a high-interest deposit account to provide easy access when required. It would be preferable not to touch the PEPs, which will be useful for providing a tax-efficient income in retirement.

The Camus' primary source of retirement income will be their occupational and state pensions. To supplement retirement income, they can then look to their investment portfolio. Given that Joanna, the main earner, may not retire until 65, it is perhaps best to leave their investment portfolio aiming for growth, and review it nearer to retirement.

The Camus' could also consider releasing capital tied up in their property during retirement, potentially moving to a less expensive residence while investing the cash released by doing so to produce extra income.

Given their assets, inheritance tax (IHT) should not be too great a concern. They should ensure they have a will in position, and might consider leaving some of the assets from their

UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT/LAMBETH BUILDING SOCIETY SIMPLY TESSA

The Product: Lambeth Build-

ing Society Simply Tessa The Deal: The society has decided to join in the Internet revolution by offering one of its Tessa products on the Web.

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up to 5 per cent if the total in- available. vestment, excluding interest, is three-times the first year's investment at maturity after five years. For follow-on Tessas, a application form to send back bonus of 2.5 per cent on the ini-

rently 7.95 per cent. In addition, paid, which could reach 8.37 per after April 1999, although any new Tessas will carn a bonus of cent, is currently the highest

Applicants to its website (http://www.simplypostal.co.uk/ app-tess.htm) can print out an to Lambeth Building Society. tial £9,000 investment will be Plus Points: Tessas, a tax-free __are_meant_to_be_relatively_danger is the society may well __a half __. paid. Lambeth says the rate saving product, will disappear uncomplicated and risk-free, gradually drop rates on the

started before then will be allowed to continue. It makes sense to start one now. It makes even more sense to obtain the best possible rate. This is it, for

Drawbacks and Risks: Tessas,

the moment , ,..

Risk-free this may be, but unproduct, below that of other socomplicated it certainly isn't. cieties, before its time is up. By offering a bonus after five It may still be worth taking

years. Lambeth is hoping to en- a punt, however, as the Tessa sure savers stay the full five-year can be transferred to another provider without losing its taxcourse even if other societies offree status, on a £25 penalty. fer more competitive rates in. the next 12 months or so. The Marks out of five: Three and

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Brush up on your figures

Collect to Invest: Develop a good eye for sculpture and old masters are within your reach, says John Windsor

Say "Old Masters" and almost everybody thinks of paintings. People forget that there were Old Master sculptors, too. Which helps to explain why Old Master sculptures fetch only a tenth of the price of paintings of comparable quality and-

A likely-looking investment? The chief beneficiaries of this current market anomaly are to rely on reputable auctioneers likely to be those descendants and dealers for advice on comof ours, umpteen generations parative rarity and price - did hence, who celebrate the fourth millennium. By then, most Old statuettes from the same cast Master paintings will be in sell last year for half today's saletatters, while Old Master bronzes, even terracotta modellos, will still be intact. But in the long term, of course, we are

Better to follow short-term trends in taste, such as the one at £15,000? In the end, you movement, over the past five years, away from French 18th aesthetic judgment. So train century allegorical figures (the your eye. It is the only way to Seasons, the Virtues) and busts again confidence. of worthies (Shakespeare 18th-century bronzes after antique Roman statues of

Significantly, it is a switch into classical taste, echoing the century culture. At Christie's culture of Britain's new Romans - disciplined, hard-nosed, increasingly wealthy. The sort of classical statuary that rich 18th century Brits bought in Rome. during their Grand Tours, appeals to them.

and mid-career are after good- views.

looking bits of sculpture to fill those omnously vacant wall. niches in their new homes.

tioneers alike. The new buyers lack both knowledge and confidence. But, to would-be disadvantage. If you are crass enough to lament the lack of a sculptor's signature on a semilook splendid in your hall - as it happens, antique sculptures are very rarely signed - then you will not be the first, or the last, to put your foot in your mouth. These days, the trade cannot afford to curl its lip at gaffes like

Unless you have plenty of time for research, you will have one of the several surviving room estimate on another? Apart from rarity, sheer aesthetics is a dominant determinant of price. Would you pay £10,000 for a sour looking Venus when there is a prettier will be thrown back on your own

The great thing about sculpincluded), in favour of Italian tures is that, unlike paintings, you can get to know them by handling them. They are touchy, feely, things - and that, too, recommends them to 20thsculpture department, Donald Johnston gives his students a glass of wine and invites them to handle a dozen sculptures on a table. Most are used to handling glasses of wine. But 3D art? It can be a revelation. It is also a switch away from They feel the texture, rub the money and into new-money in- is part of their appeal. You can

The London dealer Patricia Wengraf, who was this week supervising the crating of 40 The dearth of scholars is sculptures destined for the Inlamented by dealers and auc- ternational Fine Art Fair in New York next month, makes the point that whereas there are plenty of Old Master paintings buyers, that is not necessarily a that sell for over £1m, there are very few sculptures in that price league. She says sculptures tended to be regarded as andraped 17th-century figure of tiques rather than art - "but they the goddess Diana, which would give more bang for your buck". The price of bronzes, she

says, dipped in the years 1988-89. (These were the art market's boom years, when speculators were crowding into the sexier Impressionist paintings market). Bronzes were now rising again, but the price difference between sculptures and paintings was still a factor of 10.

She compared today's prices for Italian Grand Tour paintings and sculpture. A painting by Michele Marieschi (1710-1743, influenced by Canaletto, in turn influenced Guardi), could today command £70,000-£80,000 whereas 10in-15in bronze figures after the ancient Roman, from workshops of 18th and early-19th century Italian sculptors who were equally appreciated by British cognoscenti. could today be had for only £10,000-£15,000. They included Righetti, Valadier and Zoffoli names little known nowadays only because sculpture has slid out of fashion.

Even bronze casts in reasonable condition by the Mannerist Giambologna (1529-1608, second in reputation only to Michelangelo), change hands for only £100,000 or so, while paintings by the Mannerist Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574, whose reputation as a biographer has eclipsed his reputation as an artist), are still worth over £1m.

Joining the Old Master collecting by scholarly old patina of grease and grime that sculptures and paintings displayed at the Fair by 18 Lonterior decorating. Well-heefed do the same with dealers' stock don galleries and 14 from hibitors deal in Old Masters),



is priced £20,000. A tiny, 5.5intail cupid by Girolamo Capagna is priced £4,500 equivalent to mid-Eighties prices. In 1988-89, the tag might have been £1,000 less. Such small bronzes look silly

in niches. They are best dis-The International Fine Art Fair, played on mantelpieces and tabletops. At Christie's London The Seventh Regiment Armory, couples reaching middle-age and sculptures at pre-anction Europe (about half the ex- in December, an 8% in anony- Park Avenue at 67th Street, New and mid-anise ave after modelled Italian Nork 8-13 May mous, well-modelled Italian

Zoffoli, after Giambologna. It century, estimated £1,000-£1,500, was unsold at £480. But, in the same sale, somebody fancied a little 16th century Italian parcel-gilt "Venus After the Bath", 5.25ins tall, paying £1.840 against an estimate of £1,000-£1,500.

statue of Mercury being carried along by the wind is on sale in New York for £20,000. Contemporary paintings, also collected by the Grand Tourists, can today command £70,000-£80,000

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About four years ago Bill Gates, chairman and chief executive of the software colossus Microsoft, described banks as "dinosaurs", a label which sent shivers through the banking community.

Some people who have H Gates III may indeed believe that there is a misprint in the Bible and the sentence should actually read, "The geek shall inherit the earth". year. However, as the men from Microsoft have been trying to explain to the US Department of Justice, their dominance of the PC software business may only be transitory.

Back in 1995 Microsoft was prevented from taking over Intuit. This was possibly the company's first big setback. Intuit's Quicken personal finance software dominates the market for private money management with Microsoft's Money program in second place. However, ICL, the UK-based IT systems and services company has unveiled a "Virtual Financial Adviser", which could revolutionise the way we plan our financial affairs. It is a software program designed to assess our particular needs and offer expert advice.

The Virtual Financial Adviser takes the form of a car journey along the "road of life". Along the road, you pass speed limit signs which show your age and events that may

You can also create "what if" scenarios, such as retiring early, or request advice on events such as getting a car loan, by taking the appropriate detours. The objective is to reach the end of the road. at which point the Adviser will tell you how much pension you will receive and how comfortable a lifestyle you will have at retirement.

Once the program has built up a profile of the user. the Virtual Adviser searches a database of financial products and provide advice on which products are most suit-

Unfortunately, the Virtufollowed the career of William al Financial Adviser is not available yet ICL is in discussions with a number of financial institutions and software trials will start this

What is around now is the latest edition of Intuit's personal financial management software. Quicken 98. This includes an extensive Internet support service, which is launched automatically via the program's own embedded browser, from within the help menu. For anybody not already online, Quicken 48 includes 12 months free Internet access via Infotrade. up to 2 hours per month.

Among the software's features is direct access to its own personal finance website offering news and informed analysis in combination with Quicken's personal finance tracking and portfolio tools. allowing you to check the performance of your investments. The program also has SmartAlerts, which automatically prompt you when financial decisions need to be made. For example, when your bank account is approaching its overdraft limit. Anybody already strug-

gling with a self-assessment tax return for the second time may also want to take advantage of the software's record-keeping and records organiser. In fact, purchasers of Quicken Deluxe will also receive a free copy of OuickTax 98, Ouicken Deluxe costs £49.95.

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Charles Schwab, the execution-only sharedealing company, is launching a web trading system allowing investors to trade directly in equities on the London stock exchange and US markets. The system will offer real-time share prices. plus Reuters news, indices and company historical

Lambeth Building Society is also joining in the internet revolution by offering a taxexempt special savings account (Tessa) paying up to 8.37 per cent on minimum first-year investments of £1,500.

data. Call 0870 6066655.

The Tessa includes a 5 per cent bonus on the balance held in the account at the end of the first year. if the total investment is tripled by the time it matures after five years. Website address: www.simplypostal.co.uk/ app-tess.htm.

Mortgage Trust, the home loan lender, is launching a mortgage package for iT contractors which allows borrowers to overpay when in work and take payment holiday when between con-

The company says the mortgage, with a variable rate of 8.24 per cent, allows IT contractors to take advantage of extra income earned sorting out the socalled millennium bug. It also has a capital-raising option of up to £250,000. Call

Abbey National is also entering the self-employed market by offering two self-certified mortgages to people who may not be able to show two years' accounts. They must have been trading in their current business for the last 24 months.

The standard variable rate is 8.7 per cent. There are no booking or arrangement fees. The loan is available to first-time buyers, new and existing customers, including remortgages. Capital repayments may be

at any stage. The deal is available through independent brokers.

OHRA UK, the medical insurer, is offering its policyholders a specially negotiated reduced rate on complete health screenings carried out with Pathology Management Company. The screening service operates discounts of up to 50 per cent off the normal price. Call David Potter on 01703 620620 for exact

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Bradford & Bingley is offering a new package to first-time buyers which includes legal fees, a cashback of up to £1,005, free standard valuations and free accident, unemployment and sickness cover. Call 0800 570800.

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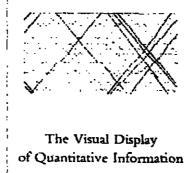
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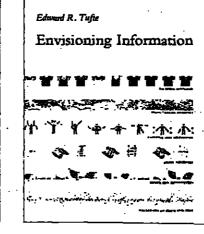
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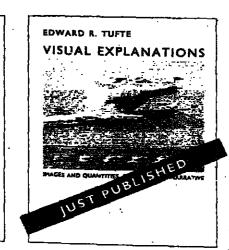


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JONATHAN **DAVIS COLUMN**

Just about the only argument promoters of shares have left at the moment to justify current levels is that share prices are going up because they are going up'

The stockbroking profession left at the moment to justify buyhardly needs help to drum up ing at current levels is that new reasons for buying shares at today's inflated levels, but the cause they are going up. process of dreaming up new

The moment that I began to were seriously starting to debate miss something. whether the business cycle had sition at such long odds.

that promoters of shares have result of excessive liquidity

rolling three-year annualised monthly volatility

1975 1977 1979 1981 1983 1985 1987 1989 1991 1993 1995

Equity volatility

share prices are going up be-

rationalisations is always fun to phenomenon is known, is a feature of every mature bull worry in earnest about the level. When the rise in share prices of share prices was when a can no longer be justified by leading American business rational argument the only magazine devoted its cover to fallback is a bandwagon argureporting how policymakers ment - hurry now, or you will

Another way of looking at been abolished. Only a fool this is to say that bull markets would want to bet on a propo- tend to end in a bubble - a moment when prices are pushed to Just about the only argument exaggerated levels, usually as a



sloshing around the economy. This is obviously becoming a real concern for policymakers

I note that both the Financial Times and The Economist are now arguing that just such a bubble appears to be developing in the US market. Monetarists such as Tim Congdon of Lombard Street Research have been carping about the rapid growth of the money supply for

Funnily enough, there does seem to be something in the argument for momentum investing as a discipline. One piece of evidence comes from Mercury Asset Management, who are a serious fund management firm, not prone to idle frippery. In a document about investment strategy which they produced last year, they pointed to some research which suggested that

markets might not, as conven- market have been, compared tional wisdom holds, be subject to "mean reversion". In other words, markets don't always revert to their long-term rates carried out. What they found

of growth. This is important because it is an essential part of the case for arguing that markets are currently overvalued, Because valuation levels are so high by historical standards, if markets are subject to mean reversion it follows that share prices collectively must, at some point,

start to come down. Mean reversion tells us nothing about how long this may take, but it does say that the correction is inevitable. The longer the period of overvaluation goes on, the bigger the correction will need to be.

One way of testing the hypothesis is to look at how volatile returns from the stock and bad times tend to repeat. stretched.

with what you would expect if mean reversion was in place. This is the exercise that MAM was that if you look at longterm data there was some evidence of mean reversion

postwar period, In the US market, there was even some evidence of mean reversion - in other words, that periods of good returns were actually followed by further periods of strong returns, especially on a five to 10-year horizon. The effect was much less marked in the UK market.

taking place. But, interestingly,

this effect did not seem to

survive if you just look at the

The clearest evidence of this phenomenon occurs in the

however.

The obvious explanation for this is that investors' inflation expectations adjust more slowly than the reality of inflation itself. Support for this idea comes from the fact that the two countries where mean reversion was clearly visible were Germany and Switzerland, whose records on inflation are second to none.

How convincing is this evidence? One has to say; not very. The data is hardly clearcal. It may help to explain why the US market has been so strong for so long, defying most expert opinions along the way. But it hardly amounts to a credible proposition on which to base your future investment

strategy. As MAM's strategy document points out, the key to longterm success in investment is achieving a balance of risk over reward, consistent with your age, circumstances and attitude to risk. The longer your investment norizon, the more willing you can afford to be to accept the higher volatility of shares as an investment.

The mistake that must commentators make is to assume that the only issue is whether one should be in shares or out of them. In reality, it is not as stark a choice as that; all longterm investors need to be in shares to some degree. The real issue is how great an exposure

And at this point the common sense solution is clear-cut. If you go chasing shares at today's levels, as momentum investors do, you run the risk of severe disappointment. Momentum investing is a recipe for iam today and pain tomorrow, if it mean increasing your exposure to the stock market at bond market, where both good a time when valuations are so

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UNDERSTANDING THE STOCK MARKET: JOHN ANDREW

Start a portfolio with a unit trust

certainly be cautious. It is not surprising that over 80 per cent failed to beat the market. in different sectors of the economy. many decide their first dip into the World However, over five years, 42.25 per cent this route certainly benefits from an cent achieved this goal. based trust will invest in the shares of 50 to 100 companies, with no single holding exceeding 10 per cent of the fund.

The proverb, "don't put all your eggs in the same basket", could well have been inin a broad range of companies certainly reduces the risks associated with buying shares. However, it is important to remember that it does not eliminate it, for if the stock market generally falls, so does the value of the fund.

There are over 1,500 unit trusts in the UK. They are divided into a number of categories, according to their aim and the shares in which they invest. Some trusts are riskier than others. For this reason, firsttime investors should only consider general trusts such as "balanced" or "managed" funds, or those that "track" the Footsie.

Since they were launched in 1988, tracker funds have enjoyed increasing popularity. The reason is quite simple, for many managed unit trusts underperform the Footsie and also have higher charges. Indeed, research published by HSBC Asset year, only 17.0 per cent of UK equity trusts managed to outperform the All Share in- ket. This means not just investing in a good

half the trusts failed to match the market. One can therefore see the attraction of trackfunds as their only exposure to the stock market is unwise. By their nature, tracker funds vented with unit trusts in mind. Investing are solely concerned with yesterday's winners as opposed to the success stories of the future. If tracker funds were available in the are managed fail to beat the market, what past, in the 1840s many investors would have missed out on the great railway boom, while in the 1920s they would not have participated the birth of the automobile industry.

More recently, devotees of trackers have not benefited from the rise in the shares of companies involved with technology. Furmarket, it does not mean that its constituents all move in the same direction. For example, in 1996, although the FT Japan Index fell by 15 per cent, two of its constituents - Toyota and Honda - saw their

share price increase by 50 per cent. However, there is a potentially far greater danger of relying solely on trusts heavily skewed towards the banking and Management reveals that, at the end of last pharmaceutical industries. Spreading risk could be a fluke. It is far better to pick a

New investors to the stock market should dex over a 10-year period. In other words, spread of companies but in organisations

While a tracker fund is a good place for of shares should be via a unit trust. Taking beat the All Share, while last year 48.33 per the newcomer to start - particularly as the charges are low - it would be unwise to so heavily concentrated in two sectors. This is especially so as banking and pharmaers. However, for an investor to rely on such ceutical shares are currently trading at p/e ratios which are considered demanding. Only the future will reveal whether future growth in earnings justify them.

As more than half the unit trusts which should one do? Once they have laid the foundations by investing in a tracker, people with sufficient money can invest directly in the shares of individual companies. As the minimum holding that makes economic sense in a company is at least £2,000, and as a portfolio should be spread across shares thermore, although an index mirrors the in at least six sectors, others may decide to obtain a wider spread by placing more funds in a unit trust.

As more than half the UK equity managed funds fail to beat the market, it is essential to do your homework before investing. Take the trouble to look at the past-performance tables and choose a fund which has performed consistently well that track the Footsie. The index is now over time. Do not be influenced by exceptional returns in the short term as this is the essence of investing in the stock mar- trust which has been among the top per-

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IATION

Unfortunately, past performance is often the only guide to future prospects. David Prosser reports

The cardinal rule of investment is that past Over the longer term, the solid but not so performance is no guide to the future. In other words, just because a particular fund has done well in the past, there's no guarantee that it will do well from now on. Let's face it though. No one's going to invest in a unit trust without taking at least a peep at its track record so far.

So, past performance does matter. Not least, a unit trust's track record matters because it's the only tangible guide that you have to its quality. The key to reading performance figures is to understand that they present nothing more than a snapshot of how a fund has done over a specific period - over other time frames, its performance may be very different.

In order to get the most from unit trust performance tables, you need to look at a fund's record over several time periods. It's comparatively easy to produce six months of outstanding results, repeating the trick over five years is much harder.

It also pays to study consistency of performance. What you want is a respectable series of returns rather than one brilliant year followed by several mediocre results. have all done well with their smaller

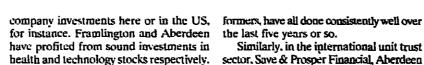
spectacular unit trusts will steadily rise to the top of the pile.

The performance tables on page 7 show the 10 best and 10 worst unit trusts over the last five years. What's noticeable about performance tables over one, five and 10 years is that they include a proliferation of funds from similar sectors. This reflects the fact that unit trusts are. to an extent, slaves to the stock markets in which they invest.

All the worst funds, for example, are unit trusts which invest in Japan and the Far East. This is a result of the crash in Far Eastern stock markets over the last year and the bear market which has plagued Japan for much of the 1990s.

Equally, nearly all of the best unit trusts over one and five years invested in Europe Longer periods are particularly important. or North America. As these were the best performing stock markets in the world over those time periods, this is hardly very

Over 10 years, however, the top 10 unit trusts are a more diverse bunch. Foreign & Colonial, Hill Samuel and Henderson



The league tables also offer another useful lesson. "Don't presume the big names are the best unit trust managers." counsels Jonathan Fry of Premier Investment Management. While there are several big names among these top performers, including Gartmore. Jupiter, Schroder and Henderson, smaller management groups such as Aberdeen, Exeter, Newton, GA and Old Mutual are also well represented.

There are very few unit trusts which invest exclusively in the UK, the exceptions being Exeter Capital Growth and CF Shaw Utilities. This isn't to say no UK funds have performed well in recent times, just not well enough to get them into these top 10s. In fact, Fleming Select Income, Jupiter UK Growth, River & Mercantile 1st Growth and Gartmore UK Smaller Com- David Prosser is features editor of panies, to name but a few of the top per- 'Investors' Chronicle'.

the last five years or so.

Similarly, in the international unit trust sector, Save & Prosper Financial, Aberdeen Prolific Technology, Henderson Global Technology and Framlington Financial have all been consistently successful per-

It's crucial, therefore, not to simply invest in the unit trusts which are at the top of the league tables today. In addition to these, there are plenty of other funds which have performed well. You need to decide where you want to invest your money and how much risk you are prepared to take.

Picking a unit trust involves looking at performance tables, of course. But, says Emma Weiss of the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds: "Ultimately, it's a matter of what money you have available and which fund suits your particular circumstances."

Finding a balance between risks and rewards risks and rewards

Don't chose a unit trust that leaves you feeling overexposed. Abigail Montrose explains how

ket - but which fund to choose? Your choice of investment will very much depend on any existing savings and investments you have, your objectives and your time scale. Once these have been established, the next question is what is your attitude to risk.

Are you the cautious type or are you prepared to take a higher risk in the search for potentially greater rewards? Assuming you are not totally risk averse, you need to consider just how much risk you are prepared to take

Unit trusts are generally regarded as medium-risk investments. No risk and low-risk investments include National Savings, gilts and bank and building society deposit accounts. Dealing with equities, where share prices can go down as well as up, means risking your capital. Unit trusts, with their readymade portfolios, reduce the gamble with shares. But the amount of risk associated with an individual unit trust will depend on how it invests its funds.

Fiona Price, who is managing director of the all-women firm of independent financial advisers Fiona Price & Partners, divides unit trust funds into four layers:

■ At the bottom, the most risk-averse funds are those which invest in cash and fixed-interest funds such as gilts, corporate bonds and preference shares. These assets should either pay interest or a fixed-rate of return.

■The next level is medium risk and includes fund of funds and managed unit trusts; well-diversified general international funds; UK equity and UK equity income trusts. These invest across a wide range of industries and so should achieve a high level of diversity, spreading your risk further.

■Above these are higher-risk funds such as those which invest in just one sector of the market, such as smaller companies, or just one particular geographical market, such as Europe, America or the Far East. As soon as you start investing in overseas markets you bring in the added risk of currency movements. At the top are high-risk funds. This includes specialists such as those which invest in emerging markets where fortunes can change overnight, as we have

Most fund managers will tell you not for the fainthearted.

So you want to invest in the stock mar- where they see each of their funds on the risk spectrum.

"It is also worth bearing in mind that the risk profiles of funds within the same sector are not identical. says Ms Price. *For instance, in going for a mediumrisk sector such as 'international' you will not only find trusts that invest in a broad geographical range of international shares, but trusts which specialise in, say, healthcare or technology companies throughout the world.

There are two ways of matching your preferred degree of risk to that of your investments - either you can select trusts that are all in the same risk bracket, or you can opt for a portfolio which contains different risk elements which, on balance, give you your pre-ferred risk profile," she says.

One measurement of risk often mentioned is volatility. Within a sector, some funds will be more volatile than others, points out Sarah Cornthwaite, spokeswoman for the performance measurement group, Reuters Funds Information. "A volatile fund is one that may shoot up in performance terms today but then it might plummet tomorrow, she says.

The more volatile a fimd, the more you can expect its price to go up and down. Volatile funds can therefore present good buying opportunities if you manage to buy on a day when the price is low and sell when the price soars. So good timing is even more important with

these funds. Volatility figures, which are being increasingly looked at by financial advisers. are worked out by looking at the average performance of a fund over a set period and seeing how smoothly that performance was achieved or if the returns or losses came in fits and starts. Volatility figures are published in some of the specialist financial magazines such as Money Management. A high volatility figure means you can expect a rollercoaster ride with the fund.

the prob

You, or rather your adviser if you have one, should always compare a fund's volatility figure with other funds in its sector, as clearly some sectors are likely to be more volatile than others. Funds which invest in emerging markets, for example, are likely to be very volatile as shares in these countries can literally double or half overnight. The more volatile funds are

What to look for when choosing a unit trust

group

■ Decide your investment aim – be it bination of both.

to take - don't invest in emerging

Charges - make sure you don't pay markets, for example, unless you are pre- too much. pared for large swings in the unit price.

Can it be put into a personal Past performance – look at the long-equity plan (PEP) or Individual term as well as annual performance. Look for a fund consistently in the top 25 per cent of its sector.

■ Determine how much performance depends on the efforts of an individual fund manager, who could move to a dif- help.

■ The reputation of the management ferent group. Or do you prefer a fund run by a team of managers?

All unit trust prices go up and down long-term growth, rising income or com- as markets change but look at a fund's volatility - does its price go and down The degree of risk you are prepared more than its rivals

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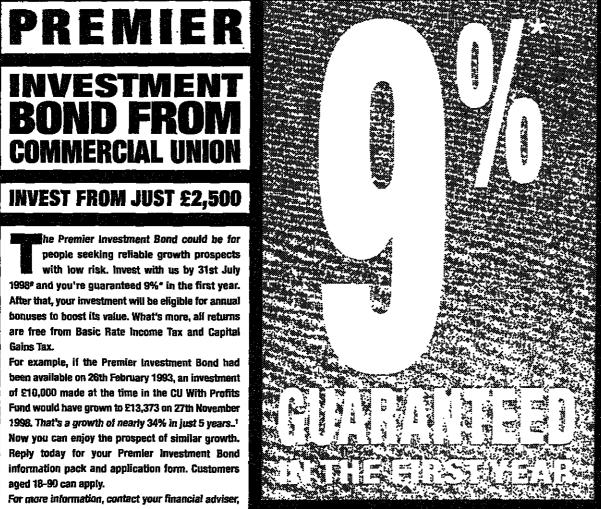
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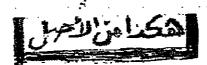
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Shop around for the good deals

The number of ways to ment, which providers are obliged to invest in a unit trust is.

growing fast. Tony Bonsignore looks at

the options available

Investing in a unit trust has never been easier. There are now more than 1,600 unit trusts available to UK investors, and the number is growing almost weekly. And, as the competition has increased, so has the ease with which you can make your

investing in a unit trust these days can be as easy as opening a new bank or building society deposit account, with providers deliberately keeping paperwork to a minimum. The problem is choosing exactly how much to option, however, less of your money invest, which trust to invest in and

whom to buy it from. Many people will decide to invest a lump sum in a unit trust. Recent vestment in a unit trust get gradually lower, and many will now accept

provide to you with, will list all the relevant details.

If you do not have a large lump sum to invest, it is still possible to get in on the scheme through a regular savings option, which is available from as little as £25 every month. Most big providers now offer this option. All an investor needs to do is set up a direct debit to make sure the provider gets the minimum investment every month although, again, additional payments are usu-

ally welcome. a sizeable lump sum, this option also allows cautious investors to avoid unnecessary risk. For instance, if you invest a huge lump sum on day one, and on day two the market unexpectedly crashes, you have immediinvestment. With a regular savings

is at risk from day one. Whether you choose lump sum or decide whether it is worth putting it years have seen the minimum in- in a personal equity plan (PEP) wrapper. If you have not already used your 1998/99 allowance, then the ananything from £500 upwards, with the swer will almost certainly be yes, as option to make subsequent top-ups it allows you to receive your returns as and when you can. Before you in-free of income and capital-gains tax. vest, though, be sure to look at the Although PEPs are set to be replaced effect charges might have on your by the Individual Savings Account in

already reassured investors that PEP investments will enjoy their tax-free status after next year's deadline. If you want to go on investing after then, you can do so in ISA.

Do look out, however, as not all is unit trust providers offer PEPs some choose to only offer plain vanilla unit trusts. But the fact that a fund manager may not offer a PEP wrapper is no reason to dismiss their unit trusts. Although a PEP is a valuable tax break for many investors, it can mean little if you are in a poorly performing trust. On the As well as avoiding the need for flip side, a good performing unit trust may offer you a return that is far better than you might otherwise

have enjoyed. The other equally important factor to consider when choosing to invest in a unit trust is who to buy it ately lost a significant portion of your from. As the number of trusts available has mushroomed in recent years, so has the number of outlets that sell them. You can now buy a unit trust face to face, over the phone regular savings, you will also need to or through responding to a newspaper advertisement, and with or

without advice. Most people who are unsure of what they are doing usually choose to have some advice. Financial advisers come in two forms - tied or independent. Most of the advisers in bank branches are tied, and so are only allowed to advise you on money. Your "key features" docu- April 1999, the Government has their own particular products. Most Promotion (0117 971 1177) can give



Off the shelf: Marks & Spencer now has dedicated financial services centres in many high street stores

trust ranges, but be careful to check out a trust's past performance before you commit yourself to buying

An independent financial adviser. neanwhile, is obliged to look at the entire range of unit trusts and other investments on offer and recommend the one best suited to you. This route can prove a little more expensive, but can be worth it in the long run, especially if your overall financial affairs need putting in order. IFA not always, be cheaper.

have pretty comprehensive unit you list of independent advisers in

The other option is to buy direct without any advice. This can be done over the phone, such as with Virgin Direct, or by simply going into your bank and building society. picking up the relevant form and then returning it with a cheque. Marks & Spencer also now has dedicated financial services call-in centres at many of their high street stores. Doing it this way can sometimes, but

One cheap way of buying a unit

many discount brokers. These regularly advertise and include firms such as PepDirect and Chase de Vere. These have deals with all the large investment groups that allow them to sell their investments more cheaply. Many unit trusts include in their initial charges a 3 per cent commission fee paid to financial ad-

most, if not all, of their commission to the customer.

JUPITER

INCOME

TRUST

+355%

1 / 66

JUPITER

JK GROWTH

FUND

+449%

Source: S&P Micropal. Offer to bid, net income

visers who sell their products. In

effect, the discount broker returns

trust direct is through one of the invest, there is a way to buy a unit trust. But do remember that, as with all investments, unit trusts should be considered as long-term holdings. Don't choose to put your money into one if you are going to need to cash it in quickly. Prices can vo-yo on a daily basis. While there have been some exceptional periods, such as the past couple of years, it is only over five years or longer that you begin to see really worthwhile gains.

Tony Bonsignore is a journalist at So, however much you want to 'Financial Adviser'.

JUPITER

EUROPEAN

FUND

+503%

The problem with green investors

Can you wear your heart on your investment portfolio? Up to a point. The market for eth-

ical investing through unit trusts has never been more popular. ethical funds appeal The amount invested in ethical investment and unit trusts to the heart more more than doubled in the last three years, and now stands at than the head £1.6bn. This year, three new trusts have joined the list of investment vehicles claiming "ethical" status, including the first

Investors' most common objections in the past have been to funds investing in companies manufacturing weapons or cigarettes, using animals for testing or having facilities in or exporting to political regimes that are considered objectionable - just think back to the anti-

apartheid movement in relation to South Africa. Nowadays, this has broadened out to include active support for companies espousing good environmental practices, or to exclude those that make are excluded on one ground or political donations or have a

record of pollution. thing, how have these funds performed? Their recent history. has been mixed: performing pharmaceutical and energy very well at first, but in the last two or three years they have fallen behind the pack. (See table.) In the past, managers of

ethical and ecological funds claimed their funds should do better than ordinary ones and often said that "an ethically run company is a well-run com- ethical investment: to what pany". They believed that be- extent is shareholder value cause ethical funds have to look closely at companies - to filter out those that may be of- criteria? The best performer fensive to some - they had a bet- over a three-year period is ter idea of how successful the

companies might be. A key to recent poor performance lies in the fact that investments than ordinary funds because of their selection crithree-quarters of the Londonlisted companies, depending in the ethical field, NPI, which on how strict the fund is. Most blue-chip companies failed to make it into the top five. fill in the coupon on page 4.

Richard Shackleton considers whether

Ethical Performance* UK Inc & Growth Average 105.76

another because of the range of their business. Top unit trust But being ethical is one performance in the last couple of years has been dominated by investment in leading financial. stocks, at home and in the USA - all blue chips and most outside the range of ethical funds. This leaves them stock picking from mainly small com-

panies, which have underperformed for the past two years. It is an issue at the heart of sacrificed in order to secure maximum adherence to ethical Framlington Health, a "sector" fund which qualifies as an ecological one only because it specialises in healthcare. Analysts ethical funds have less choice of point out that this is a sector where takeover activity has

been frenetic, driving underlying teria. These may exclude up to stock prices sharply higher. Among the other big players

has fewer exclusions than most,

Investors who want a clear conscience could find themselves investing in funds with strong "negative" criteria. Almost all the ethical unit trusts screen companies and exclude those involved in activities ranging from alcohol production to arms manufacturing, animal

testing or gambling. In addition, green funds mostly exclude polluting comer or the fur trade This can lead to bizarre conse-

in Marks and Spencer which sells alcohol in its food halls. A different tack is being used increasingly to promote ethical and green funds: "positive" screening, Instead of simply ignoring "bad" companies and picking from the rest, positive managers look for those contributing to clearing up pollution or improving health. Friends Provident, the oldest and largest ethical fund, (which also failed to make the top five) looks favourably on companies supplying such basic necessities as food and water, or quality

panies, or those involved in quences. British Telecom, for instance, is excluded by many funds because it owns a cable company that runs a pornographic television channel although it contributes almost

nothing to BT's overall earnings. Some funds manage to inciude such companies by setting upper limits on the amount of income derived from certain activities. Crédit Suisse, the second-best performer, excludes companies earning more than 10 per cent from alcohol or tobacco - which allows it to invest

public transport or medicines. It also prefers those which have

community involvement. "The Independent' has produced a free 'Guide to Ethical Finances'. written by its personal finance editor, Nic Cicutti. The guide, sponsored by Friends Provident, covers ethical investment, retirement planning, banking and buying a home. Call 0800 214487 or

good employment practices and

Best unit trusts over five year		Worst unit trusts over five yea	
Fund	Return*	Fund	Return*
ivestio Compean Growth	12,739	Francis Provident Japanese Smaller Cos	2579
Gartmore European Select Opportunities	£3,692	Invesco Japan Smaller Cos	£576
control Growth	£3,502	Save & Presper Japan Smaller Cos	2575
No Manual European	£3,557	M&G Japan	€565
	23,545	Edinburgh Japan Smaller Cos	156 3
A North America Growth	23,478	Schroder Japan Smaller Cos	2552
hitamostale Spropesti School Growth	£3,430	Baring Japan Sundse	2550
aring Europe Select	€3,410	Fidelity Japan Smaller Cos	£534
Misco European Smaller Cos.	S - £3,381	Henderson Japan Smaller Cos	.0521
loyed & Sun Alkance N America Nake of ET 000 messed on 31,03/97, 31/03/93 and 3	£3.283	Save & Prosper Korea	£300 Source: HS

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Road test Saab 9-3, by Roger Bell

Saab's success in Britain rides on BMW's, according to one school of thought. Aspirational cars, BMWs. They are well made, dynamically strong and rewarding to drive. Trouble is, down-range ones have become two-a-pfennig. That BMW sold more best-in-class 3-series models here last year than VW sold Golfs underlines just how commonplace they are:

Does it matter? Not a jot, in a rational world, but then many carbuying decisions are far from rational. The popularity of the 3-series may, for the image-conscious, be reason enough to reject it. There are, after all, several worthy alternatives, among them Saab's new 9-3, which purports to rival the BMW on merit, and beat it on exclusivity and price.

Saab sold nearly 17,000 cars in Britain last year (against BMW's 64,000), the bulk of them Mondeo-sized 900s. Even though it has been the bedrock of Saab's slow recovery, the safe and solid 900 set no benchmarks, Now.

been supplanted by the 9-3 (Saab, like Volvo, seems beat on confusing us with number tags), which is said to embrace more than a thousand improvements. Although you'd be hard-pressed to spot five of them from the outside - the most obvious is a new corporate grille - the 9-3 is a big step forward. It may even get GM-owned Saab back into the black after years of unprofitablity.

Changes common to all models inchude softer, more resilient suspension. a la 9-5, to give a smoother ride; sharper steering for keener handling; and wider tyres for extra grip. There's also more safety equipment, including Saab's ingenious anti-whiplash head restraints): simpler anti-theft security, and improvements to a fascia that now carries bespoke radio, useless elsewhere. Standard equipment has been im-

proved, too: most models get

As before, there are three body styles - five-door hatch, three-door hatch (euphemistically called a coupé) and a convertible, hitherto the best-seliing soft-top in its class, much to the chagrin of Audi and BMW. Petrol engines -2.0, 2.3 and 2.0 turbo - are as before. Both the 2.0s I drove impressed with their refinement, engine balancer shafts smoothing away vibration.

New to the range - new to Saab, in fact - is an advanced 2.2 turbocharged diesel with direct injection, 16 valves and a cat-cleaned exhaust. Although gruffer and harsher than the petrol versions, the diesel is easy on the ears, impressively lively - mid-range acceleration is excellent - and frugal. Sadly for Saab, onestep-ahead BMW has a new four-cylinder 2.0 diesel that is even more

powerful, economical and refined.

I quite liked these new Saahs (prices range from £16,500 to £29,800 before extras). They are quiet, well made, nicely furnished (particularly the up-range ones) and relaxing. They ride smoothly and corner securely, though spirited driving betrays lamentably poor side support. Another gripe is that the steering of the 143mph 2.0 turbo tugs aggressively under power.

Although they are pleasant enough to drive - sharp steering, a nifty gear change and crisp switchgear stand out - the 9-3s do not beguile or entertain to the same degree as some rivals. Alfa's new 156 is a better driver's car. So is the new 3-series BMW, which looks set to maintain its advantage over the Saab's much-improved middleweight.

Saab 9-3 2.0i Five-door, £16,495-20,745. Engine: 1985cc, four cylinders, 16 valves, 1305hp at 6,100rpm. Transmission: 5-speed gearbox (auto extra), front-wheel drive. Performance: top speed 124mph, 0-60mph in 10.6 seconds, consumption 28.5mps.

Alfa Romeo 156 2.0 four-door, from £19.730. Head-turning looks. terrific driver appeal, lovely cabin, great character. Best-value model is £17,573 1.8; fastest, 142mph V6. Audi A4 1.8 four-door, £19,016. Pricey, but classy. Turbocharged

diesel also a cracker. BMW 318i, from £38,265. Prestige name, build quality and

driver appeal. Ford Mondeo 2.0 Ghia. £17,495. Well specified Ghia loaded with equipment that costs extra elsewhere. Best-value model is up-range 1.8.



If you can mend it with string, India will buy it

James May investigates the realities of marketing cars for India's new middle class

In the days of Empire it was the built Japanese 125cc bikes into. jewel in the crown, a land prized ... something four-wheeled. for its craft skills and exouc natural resources. Now India is prized territory once more, and the new colonisers are the global car makers.

Manufacturers tend to divide their empire-building ambitions into short, medium and longterm projects. Short-term goals are being satisfied by South America, particularly Brazil.

In the long run, most makers are keeping an eye on China, a potential market-place of unimaginable - some would say catastrophic - proportions.

That leaves, in the allimportant medium term, India - which, after some 45 years in a state-controlled economic wilderness, dispensed with trade barriers in 1993 and embraced. classic free-market structures.

On the face of it, the appeal of the Indian market is as immense as the country itself. It has a population of almost 1 billion, of which you need attract only 0.1 per cent to have 1 milfion customers. India has a burgeoning middle class, and Indians are keen to step from their Bajaj scooters and licence-

I LOVE cars, especially when someone

else is driving. I recently test drove a Porsche Boxster at Brands Hatch. The

only hummer was they wouldn't let me

compliment I could pay the worst car I

ancient then. It was so old it was insured against fire, theft and Viking raids.

The difference between it and a golf hall was that you can drive a golf ball 200 yards without a problem. I bought it : from my father-in-law for about £100. It was worth more in scrap. But I had to

have it before my daughter was born to

served that purpose, but then everything

ferry my wife to and from hospital. It

Honestly, it was a nightmare.

was an absolute write-off.

max it, It was hot. Which is not a

ever owned, a very battered, white Singer Chamois, I had it when I was 18, which was 24 years ago, and it was

there to examine the work of Ford, Mercedes-Benz and India's domestic manufacturer, Maruti-Suzuki, suggests that, rather like Hinduism, the whole business is much more complicated than at first appears.

Both Ford and Mercedes, like Fiat, General Motors and Hyundai, are building "Indianised" versions of their cars. They could just import them, of course, but punitive import taxes encourage manufacturers to set up shop locally.

tablish a joint venture with an Indian company, for example. -But, like most aspects of Indian bureaucracy, these rules are maileable. Indian-labour is skilled and cheap; a good

welder earns about £3 a day. premium foreign cars in India blamed, but the trith is that the supposed new wealth of India



There are rules: you mustes- this thinking." says Dr Til and the forthcoming Indian Becker, head of Mercedes-Benz India.

The most expensive Indianbuilt car is the Mercedes E-class at almost £40,000. The next most expensive are the Ford Escort and Vauxhall Astra, both at Despite all this, sales of around £18,000. Less than 2 per cent of Indians pay income tax; fell well short of the manufac those who do are rich enough turers bullish predictions last to buy the Mercedes; those year. Market cantion is being who don't are wary of advertising their wealth.

Then there are the demands is not as great as was believed. that India makes on a car - simple, leaf-sprung and emin-"You have to be careful with which is why the Indian Escort, ently repairable Hindustan Am-

Fiesta, have beefed-up suspension and raised ride height.

The roads infrastructure is simply decades behind new vehicle technology. "Cars must come first, roads later," says Vincet Ohri, of the Ministry of Industry. That's what happened in the West, of course - the growing popularity of the car pushing and paying for roadbuilding. In India the process is happening much faster, but on rough roads the appeal of the

bassador (aka 1948 Morris Oxford, built in India since the Fifties) is hard to beat.

Manufacturers going into India are ignoring the lessons of been achieved with "the Beetheir own history. Poor countries the of India" - a true people's have always been mobilised by

Deceptive Benz: the Mercedes factory at Pune Photograph: Stephen Lovell-Davis

simple, cheap, readily maintained cars - which brings us to Maruti - or more properly Maruti-Suzuki, a joint venture set up between the Japanese company and the Indian government in 1983. Maruti's best seller is the 800, an absolute bargain at around £3,000 before local taxes, It can also be mend-

ed with a brick and a piece of

string, and the spares and back-

up network is extensive. You can criticise the car, but you can't knock the philosophy. While other manufacturers grapple with the tenuous new market. Maruti can offer statistics to make them ween: a factory running at 135 per cent capacity, and 82 per cent of the domestic market. This has

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We may have Watchdog, Which? magazine and What Car?, but that's nothing compared with the consumer advice offered to punters on the other side of the Atlantic. In America, nanny-knows-best advice has got to the point where consumer reporters allegedly wear bonnets, nightgowns and slippers, and go to sleep with the aid of a hot Horlicks.

On a recent trip to the US, I picked up a copy of Consumer Reports magazine, published by the Consumer's Union. It was their annual "auto issue" and it had more factual information on curs than any single magazine I've ever seen over here. What Car? is full of road tests and prices. Watchdog occasionally rubbishes products (such as its recent, and as it transpires, misguided, lambasting of the Ford Mondeo) and Which? has an engaging amateurism about it, but the US consumer mags give solid facts on complicated issues. Want to know which car fares best in crash tests and injury claim rates? It's all there,

In Britain, of course, cars are occasionally smashed into concrete blocks in the interests of consumer knowledge. But the tests are infrequent, and usually just test a small batch of cars. If you, the punter, want to know whether a Toyota Corolla is safer than a Ford Escort, it's almost impossible to tell.

The big US consumer groups, on the other hand, will tell you how cars fare in front and offset crashes. in side impacts, and in injury claim rates. They can do this because government-backed bodies crash test most cars on sale, and make the findings public. They'll also tell you about reliability, performance, dimensions, depreciation and, in all probability, whether the glove box of an Escort is bigger or smaller than a Corolla's. Add the hugely thorough JD Power customer satisfaction findings and, in America. prospective car buyers can read so much about the various new cars on offer that by the time they've finally made their choice, the car will probably no longer be in production.

US consumer groups also have huge power. Cars have even been kicked out of production by consumer champions. The Chevrolet Corvair was felled by Ralph Nader (though he, like many ageing nannies, subsequently complained so much that nobody now pays him any attention.)

Sifting through the latest consumer tests on the 1998 models doesn't make uplifting reading, but there's no doubting its usefulness. Obviously, only cars available in the US are tested, which spares Rover, Fiat, Renault. Peugeot, Citroen and Alfa-Romeo any embarrassment. All have now deserted the US market, because nobody bought their cars.

Cars commended for their front-crash protection include the Audi A4, the Ford Mondeo (called the Contour in the US), the Honda CRV, the Jeep Wrangler and the Volvo \$70/V70. None do brilliantly in the side-impact tests: the Hyundai Sonata is rated as "severe or fatal injury certain", which should give Sonata drivers something to think about when next they cross busy junctions. (The test itself involves a car travelling at 17mph being hit in the side by a car doing 34mph). The BMW 5-series and Volvo

\$70/V70 offer "good" front offset crash protection. The injury claim rate figures give an idea of how often occupants are injured in crashes. Star cars include the Chrysler Grand Voyager MPV (Tony Blair's new family car, incidentally), Honda Integra, BMW 7-series. Mercedes S-class (the sort of car in which Princess Diana was killed). Lexus LS400 and Volkswagen Golf. Apart from the Golf and the Honda, they're all big, luxury cars, which confirms the notion that the bigger the car, the safer.

Cars that have "much worse than average" injury claim rates include the Nissan SX coupe, the little Suzuki jeeps, the Toyota RAV4, the Hyundai Sonata (again) and the Hyundai Accent.

Crash tests are an imperfect way of testing safety, for the simple reason that no two accidents are the same. But at least they give us a clue. In Britain. although things are improving, we still buy safety mainly on manufacturers' reputations and

Nanny may be a pain in the neck at times. But just occasionally she has something sensible to say.

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seemed to go wrong with it. The clutch went, then the indicators. There was I replaced the wreckage of that Singer with a Ford Granada which was trouble with the gearbox, loads of rust. followed by a white Jaguar 3.6 which I bought after I joined The Sun in 1985. My worst driving incident came on That car got me into a few scrapes. the A102. Driving south from the Probably the most embarrassing incident Bluckwall Tunnel. I took the Blackheath was when I toured the country with a turn-off. However, a car on my nearside very hyped band in the mid-80s. I think I swerved out in front of me while the car had better draw a discreet veil over an on my offside was overtaking. I could :: incident on the back seat involving a only avoid hitting one of them by thiving female journalist from Record Mirror and up the kerb. That meant I smashed into a lamppost. I was unscathed, but the car a member of Sigue Sigue Sputnik. These experiences haven't put me off

motoring at all. I look forward to the day I can afford an Aston Martin. So watch Gagging For It. PLEASE!

Garry Bushell is television cruic for the Sun. He has just written and presented 'Gagging For It' on London Weekend Television and will be producing and hosting a new variety summer season show at the Pleasure Beach Paradise Room, Blackpool, 1-15 June. He was talking to

Learn to be a cat burglar

Child labour is against the law, but the law doesn't carry much weight when the boss is a burglar, Robert Liebman discovers

When Julia Falk and Andrew Arnold bought their Victorian three-bedroom terraced house in south London nearly two years ago, it seemed secure enough. The previous owners had installed three locks in the front door, and all of the windows had window locks.

Nevertheless, "we wanted it to be as secure as it could possibly be, so we made an appointment with a Crime Prevention Officer," says Julia, an account manager in public relations with London-based Property Marketing Company, A phone call to her local constabulary was all it took for a free home consultation.

Their front-door locks passed inspection. Simple old-fashioned locks can be opened with an ordinary credit or storeloyalty card. Good-quality five-pin and seven-pin locks can be opened only with a key and are made of drill-resistant metal. However, "the CPO recommended that we insert a bolt on the other side of the door. where the hinges are," says Julia, "He explained that this bolt prevents robbers from breaking the door off on the hinge side."

Window locks by themselves don't necessarily suffice. Some types are better than others, and some windows need more than one, "He said that burglars still use children to get into small spaces. It's like Oliv-

Burglar alarms are also not created equal. "With some alarms the burglar can just cut the wires and the alarm will stop ringing. He recommended a type which continues to ring even if the wires are cut."

"If you are considering installing an alarm, get advice from your insurers first, before buying one. Many insurance companies insist that the installation of alarms is carried out by registered companies," This piece of information is authoritative. coming as it does from the Association of crime bit with a "Beat the Burglar" brochure.

In addition to explaining the difference between good locks and the not-so-good variety, the brochure notes that "locks and bolts are only as strong as the door and the frame to which they are fitted. So check the woodwork and replace if it is at all weak

Where do most burglaries occur? Through windows," claims the brochure. And, betraying its insurance orientation. reminds us to "take photographs or videos of items such as jewellery and keep them with your policy. You will have a better chance of getting your property back after a burglar." Photos also help when you

If burglars use little tricks, so too do crime prevention officers. Five years ago in another part of south London, first-timebuyer Richard wanted his new house to have every advantage from day one, so he too made an appointment for a CPO visit. "I opened the door but he immediately told me to shut it again. I stood there wondering what was going on when suddenly I could see the entire bottom half of the door moving inwards." Richard says.

He joined the CPO in front of the house. "He did it again. He just pushed with his knee and the bottom part of the door folded inwards, like cardboard." The door needed a deadbolt lock anyway, a lock which is usually locked from inside and can be opened only with a key. The knee demonstration indicated precisely where the deadbolt should be positioned.

"I was in the palms of his hands after that little demonstration," says Richard. "In retrospect, I realised that British Insurers, who are doing their anti-that was probably why he did it. It was very persuasive."

Richard's CPO mentioned nothing about underaged pint-sized accomplices, but he did recommend window locks for all downstairs windows, including one which seemed barely wide enough to admit an alleyeat. After the knee-in-the-door trick, the entertainment continued with the CPO explaining the modus operandi of the local criminal underworld, conducting Richard through a tour of crime in his neighbourhood generally. "He compared upstairs and downstairs windows, and explained why burglars like some areas better than others. It was fascinating as well as informative," Richard recalls.

"I wanted tall hedges for privacy," he says, "but he explained that the same privacy enables burglars to work undetected." Hedges and walls provide hiding places for rapists as well as robbers.

Burglar alarms and approved window locks start paying for themselves via discounts on insurance premiums.

For locks on seven windows and various other door locks and devices, Richard was nearly £200 out of pocket, "I'm not entirely free from worry now." says Richard, who feels that a really determined or desperate burglar will defeat his level of protection, and almost any reasonable level. "I know I've done my reasonable best. The money was worth it, just for that peace of

Association of British Insurers, 0171 600 3333; Property Marketing Company, 0171



Out of the wilderness

A huge garden can be a mixed blessing.

Fiona Brandhorst gets some tips from the experts on how to make it look its best

From being "sad people who watch gardening programmes" to the owners of a state-of-the-art back yard took the Neesam family a mere two over" by the BBC's Home Front in the Garden series brought instant life to the larger-than-average scruffy family garden. If you're an avid watcher of the tidal wave of home interest mation, if only for the 40ft sail and

riotously colourful curved wall. from neglect because their owners don't know where to start. Some "filla space" with a swimming pool, But as one Kent estate agent remarks, pools don't necessarily sell a house. and not everyone wants the extra exa place for adults to sit and eat with friends. "We never envisaged anyfrom reclaimed railway sleepers and the existing metal staincase to the gar-

out there all winter." Some of the creations, however, weeks. The results of being "made fell on fallow ground. Presenter Anne McKevitt's watering can waterfall has gone. "It was a lovely idea to introduce water, though," insists Juli, "we plan to make the area into a bog garden with carnivorous shows, you'll remember its transfor- plants." And the sail "completely serving its purpose" hiding their view of the unattractive builder's yard Very large gardens can suffer at the back has been removed, temporarily, due to the recent high winds. "The clinking noise drove us

mad at night." Ms McKevitt stresses that a large garden needs to be broken down into different sections, "Look upon it as penses incurred for its upkeep, "It's extra space outdoors, and consider the

also a big safety worry for children." various people who are going to use a family of chipmunks. "It wasn't part like a neglected woodland," re-In spite of completely ignoring the it; places for children and adults as of the original plans at all," says Neesams' colour preferences, the well as combined areas." Low main-BBC makeover team did take on tenance is top of her list. She's hapboard their needs - somewhere safe py to admit she knows nothing about for their four children (aged from 18 gardening, but claims it's a bonus, "I months to eight years) to play and want to know how to do things without being Alan Titchmarsh."

Grethe and Ove Andresen view thing like the results we got." says Juli—the third of an acre that surrounds Neesam. "The decking area, made their sprawling bungalow as an extension of their home. The kitchen overlooks a circular patio through a den, is brilliant. Our toddler's been seven metre glass wall. "We bought some cheap, low-voltage outdoor uplighters and spotlights in Florida last vear so we can enjoy the garden by

night," says Grethe. The Andresens had plans drawn up for the garden and intend to complete one big project every year. It sectioned to include raised vegctable beds with gravel paths between: a young orchard with apple, pear, plum and cherry trees; a harked-over play area with a climbing frame for their three sons and a wild flower meadow.

They open the garden to their neighbours in the small Lincolnshire village once a year. The star of the show has to be the octagonal aviary home to parakeets, budgerigars and

World of

PROPERTY

Grethe, "but it's bang in the middle of the garden and fits in so well."

Andree Battersby, a freelance landscape architect, has plenty of tips for owners of large unruly gardens. "Live with it for a while and get to know it through the seasons, taking photographs, so you know its features good and bad. Make a plan covering a five-year period and work on it area by area as your budget allows."

Andree Battersby is a great supporter of trees. "You can plant a mini wood in around three metres. Choose species like willow, birch, cherry and alder, that can be easily coppiced if they grow too large, and plant a carpet of bulbs and spreading perennials such as sweet woodruff, foxgloves and wood anemones."

Penny Henrion's garden has a sense of the countryside, even though it's on the edge of a large town in Berkshire, and the sounds of the nearby major road and rail links are a constant hum. Hellebores. bluebells, wild violets and primroses are just some of the natural in-

members Penny.

"It's been a lot of hard work and we curse it sometimes, but we make the most of it all the year round." Penny, a Buddhist, recently uncovered a brick path in the undergrowth. "It's exactly the length of a meditation path - 20 paces," she says.

while some of us yearn for ju 100ft of garden to care for lovingly, Sheila Bryant has 300ft of grass to play with behind her Thirties semi in a suburban cul-de-sac in Hertfordshire. She finds mowing the extensive lawns, wisely sectioned off to create more interest, therapeutic and her advice to budding big gardeners is simply to invest in a good mower.

Anne McKevitt is running workshops on breaking garden rules at the BBC Good Homes Show at Birmingham's NEC. She believes it's not part of the British culture to experiment in the garden. However, the last series of Home Front in the Garden pulled twice as many viewers as Gardeners' World. I get the feeling that our back yards, whatever their size, will never be the same again.

habitants of the 150ft garden. "When Andree Battersby 0131-693 6413; BBC



we moved in seven years ago, it was Good Homes Show 0121-767 4711. A rosy outlook the Neesam family love their 'new' garden

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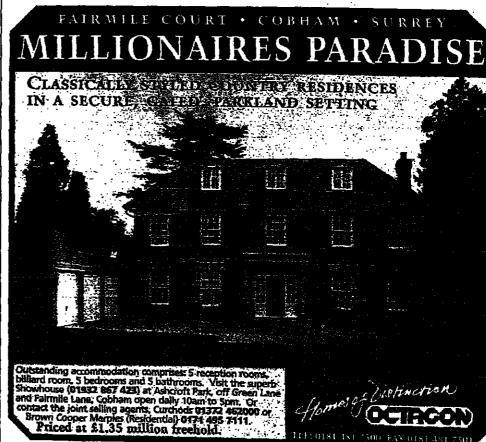
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On the waterfront

Lucky people win the lottery. Really lucky people live on, next to, above and sometimes

involuntarily in the Thames, Robert Liebman discovers

Malcolm and Liz Whitehead live in a house so close to the river that, Malcolm says: "When the tide comes in, canocists paddle down our road. There are apocryphal stories about canoeists face-to-face with cars, each insisting on the right of

Malcolm recalls a sports car owner who ignored the sign "River Subject to Sudden Flooding", and returned to find his car almost totally submerged.

Originally ensconced in what had been Malcolm's bachelor flat in Hampstead overlooking the pond, they first started property hunting in Kensington to be nearer Liz's ailing parents. They found their current house almost by chance when prices drove them further and further from Kensington. Malcolm remembers a period lasting about two months, driving up and down strange streets, going further and further from Kensington by the day.

According to Liz: "An estate agent sent us to a property that happened to be in Chiswick. We didn't like the house, but we erve around and stumbled on his road and then this house on Chiswick Mall. As we were ad- munoglobulin jabs for each of miring it, the owner came out." When they expressed interest in sniffed, "You won't be able to afford it."

She's lucky they didn't separate her from her tonsils on the work." spot. She was dealing with two doctors who could and did afford it. Soon their Chiswick boys stayed out of the gated household was home to Oliver, Barnaby.

Is a riverfront property really a good place in which to raise children? "Oliver once rude his bicycle straight into the river," says Malcolm. "Fortunately, it happened right in



front of me, so I jumped in and pulled him out. We were both smelly, and Oliver was annoyed that I hadn't rescued his bike." A consultant gynaecologist at King's College, he knew enough about medicine and urban rivers to organise hepatitis imthem after a good hosing down.

When, some time later, low huving her house, the owner tide enabled Malcolm to wade into the river and retrieve the bike, the ever-grateful Oliver observed: "The lights don't

For Liz, an anaesthetist at

Ealing Hospital, as long as the riverside garden, the river posed cautious and wary because the road is subject to tidal flooding. We were stranded a few times, unable to access the house. I obtained a Port of London tide timetable after that."

Between Hammersmith and

Mall is a willowy green stretch opposite a nearby ayot (island). Although the Thames is a constant presence in their lives, riverside life is only one of several attractions: "There are very interesting people along the road," says Liz, "and a nice parish church and corner shop, gardens and wildlife. This house

feel special living here. You are village well outside the busy me-

previous occupiers, and you

investment, says Liz, explain- ed residence. didn't monitor the value of has at least four bedrooms and their house. Neither of them had reckoned that, after 10 bedroom duty. It contains a amount of development 4185; High Command: clo years, they would be going their gazebo, terraces (six in all) on throughout London and to the separate ways. In fact, their different levels, a 44ft-long rehouse has rocketed in value, and ception area, and views spanthe six-bedroom semi-detached ning 360 degrees: Tower Bridge

Strand on the Green, Chiswick mock-Tudor will soon have new

If, by any chance, Chiswick riverside is too downmarket for you, to the Tower with you. Next to Tower Bridge on the

south side is High Command, a multi-level penthouse in the former Anchor Brewhouse, a grade I listed building in an area known as Shad Thames. The has a provenance of interesting property is on four storeys, stretching from the seventh to the eleventh floor. Take the lift virtually in central London but to the seventh floor, enter the feel as if you are in a country apartment and either negotiate the stairs or avail yourself of the internal private lift, exclusive to This was our home, not an this unique, recently complet-

several lounges that can do

up against the side of the building, one of the rooms - the former loading bay - is directly above the water.

Perhaps in the spirit of a £9.99 widget seeming much cheaper than the same item for rambling family homes." ten quid, the asking price is £3.95m. An offer is worth try-

Never mind seven-digit homes. It's a big river.

Shad Thames, according to Gary Arnold of Waterview Thames Valley, is one of four recognised Docklands areas; dreds of communities klands there really isn't a n great deal of riverside housing. but there is an incredible west.'

The west includes developments in Kingston and Ted- 0181 398 8850.

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seems touchably near, and dington, a mixture of town The Tharnes when, at high tide, the river laps houses and apartments. Mr Arnold notes that, in the Staines region, which encompasses Malcolm and Laleham, Egham, Walton and several other towns, "there's a good mix of small island homes and family homes, including

Liz's son,

bike, but

retrieved

Photograph:

Kalpesh Lathigra

The further upstream you go," Mr Arnold explains, "the greater the choice of prestige homes." The recently refurbished Windsor Castle is not on the market, but elsewhere in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, there are literally hunthe others are Northside, Isle of containing thousands of homes Dogs and Rotherhithe. "East of in various shapes, sizes and

> Malcolm Whitehead, 0171 207 Beauchamp Estates, 0171 499 7722; c/o FPD Savills 0171 488 9586; Waterview Thames Ditton,



PENNY **JACKSON**

Homes fit for a Lord

When Inverforth House on Hampstead Heath was bought by Pamlion Properties four years ago, the only people living there were a couple of maintenance men. They would not recognise their quarters today.

Now, a penthouse apartment of 4,000 sq ft with bedrooms created out of roof spaces, it commands a price of just under 13m and is one of nine homes, or rather residences - an appropriate word for once - in the London mansion that belonged to Lord Leverhulme at the beginning of the century.

The Hill, as it then was, acquired a new grandeur in a mix of architectural styles and it is those lavish additions that have been returned to their former opulence after years of benign neglect as a hospi-

A vast terrace with classical columns has been divided to give two garden-floor suites the grandest patios in town. The Hshaped Leverbulme drawing room, re-gilded with 25 carat gold, leads on to 2,000 sq ft of terrace.

The gardens (Grade II listed) are bordered by a pergola that is a public right of way - not even Lord Leverhulme could buy out that right. The one unsold wing - the other has gone to foreign buyers is a house with its own entrance and hasement swimming pool and a price tag of

Local buyers have been far from reticent. The selling agents FPD Savills and Goldschmidt & Howland report a great deal of Hampstead interest.

Activity over Easter in the housing marswallowed up ket was, like the curate's egg, good in parts. Andrew Jeffery, president of the National Association of Estate agents, put a brave Oliver, and his face on a weekend that proved to be a wash-out and said that the market picked luckily both

up in many areas.
But in Herefordshire, the only people doing the viewing during one of the busiest times of the year were insurance companies, "I went to view a house in a village near Hereford but was met by a wave of water", says Andrew Morris who has an estate agency in Hereford.

"When I spoke to the owner she was under feet of water. When I rang another vendor to arrange for a viewing, they were trying to cope with water flooding under the front door." He says that the weather always has an effect on the rural market. "We have had a very good winter because it has been so mild. Prices have increased this year by about 5 per cent. but a shortage of property is still a big prob-



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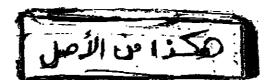
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lection of brass Indian lanterns

sold through the Stiffkey Lampshop

in Norfolk. They come in paraffin.

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candle versions. Shown here is the

new brass Star Lantern, which is lit

by tea lights and comes with a screw-

from a bamboo pole in the garden,

or in tubs. It costs £12.50 plus

and outdoor furniture made from

reclaimed and redundant farming

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have seen. Ploughs, old cart wheels

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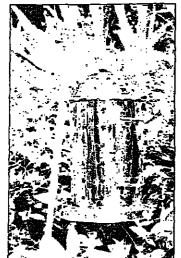
£1.50 p&p.

Hot nights in the garden It may not be the Med, but you can still enjoy the outdoors with some inspired foreign ideas, says Rosalind Russell

Selling garden and terrace furniture has become a massive business, covering everything from plush padded swing chairs to Beam-Me-Up-Scotty gas-fired barbecues with knobs on. But some of the best ideas come from abroad and - even better - suit our unpredictable climate perfect-

The Chimenea is a hand-made, kiln-fired Mexican wood-burning stove, recently launched at the Ideal Home Exhibition. The Hertfordshire company importing them plans to sell them through garden centres and small shops selling unusual furniture. They are not designed for cooking on, but to provide heat on cool evenings after the barbecue is over.

Says the firm's David Owen: "When it gets a bit chilly, usually people start drifting in. doing the washing up and it ruins the party.



Indian magic: Stiffkey



Patio party: the Chimenea from Mexico will encourage your barbecue guests to linger longer

longer and carry on drinking," Mr Owen first saw the stoves while touring Mexico. looking for new ideas for his other line, stone-built fireplaces. The stoves are made of terracotta and finished with an actylic seal to prevent water seepage. "We recommend they are put away in a garage or shed for the winter. The Mexicans say they are frost-proof, but I don't know how much they know about our

They come in two sizes - one just over 3ft high at £194, the other just under 4ft high at £244 – and in a green, charcoal and mocha. A stand s provided and the price includes

VAT and delivery.

Meanwhile Big K, the charcoal supply company, has extended its BBQ range to include an Italianmade barbecue with a chimney. No

This way you can stay out a bit barbecues are delivered in the natural grey colour, but can be painted with masonry paint. The most popular choice is Mediterranean white and terracotta.

"This is the first year of importing them and we sold a lot from the stand at the Ideal Home Exhibition to people looking for something different," says Big K's Chris Kleanthanous.

They are sold self-assembly, but Big K promises it's not difficult to put one together. The large pieces need cementing, for extra safety. "They are very heavy, so you would have to give a hefty shove to get one over. They can be left outside all choice of three colour glazes: moss year, with just a new coat of paint in the spring to freshed up."

They cost from £300, depending on size, and all three models come with a chrome-plated grill. The smallest is 198cm high (about 6ft). the medium 210 cm and the large 230cm. While they're not cheap,

business and finding a design partner in Thailand. Most of the pieces come from the northern provinces in Thailand and are of Burmese teak, when the workers were able to forest it, so it's already seasoned.

They can be left out over winter and the company supplies infor-mation on methods of treatment. You can access the firm on the Internet. Delivery can take between eight and 12 weeks. One of the most popular and striking pieces is the Cartwheel Bench, which costs £399 plus delivery Also new for the garden is a se-

friends wanted the same. He spent

a year researching the potential

sales market before setting up the

Meanwhile anyone who has eaten in an outdoor cafe in France in chilly weather will remember with gratitude the gas-fired patio heaters: a kind of flying saucer on a pole. West Country company Continental Awnings make and sell them for £754 each, including VAT on hook bracket so it can be hung and delivery. They are run off gas or butane gas, adjustable so you have as much or as little heat as you need and have a self-ignition switch. They can be left outside all niture importer, sells unusual indoor

'We can also provide Victorianstyle lamps which hook round the top." says Rich Wood, "so you can see what you're eating at the same time... which may or may not be a good thing!"

shipped to the UK. Kevin Mack, a The Chimenea Company, 01923 consulting engineer, travels to Thai-261111; Big K. 01366 500147; land every month to scour the Stiffkey Lampshop, 01328 830 460; Teak Antiquity, 01322 551855, and

THREE TO VIEW: WITH PERFECT PATIOS

The view from. the paved terrace of Pen An Mor must be one of the most desirable in the country. The Grade II listed. four-storey Victorian lown house stands on the Esplanade in the centre of



wall, facing south-east across the harbour to Politian and out to sea. The three-bedroom house was renovated eight years ago, to include a 17th kitchen. fitted with Canadian maple units and Siemens double oven, dishwasher and microwave. The drawing room has a sliding window, overlaing by wis-teria, leading out to the terraced garden. Steps from the garden lead down to the water 50 yards away, and there's a double garage that can also be used as a dinghy store. £325,000 through John D Wood (01962 86313F).

Riverside Cot-Hawes in Wensleydale has a 12ft patio area with barbecue, stone table. fairy lights and stone flag floor. The two-reception, six-bedroom house overlooking the Widdale Beck



also has a kitchen garden and a walled front garden with stone flagged patio. There are lovely views of the River Ure and dale from the property, which has a large dining kitchen and two sitting rooms. £135,000 through GA Town & Country (01969 623451).

Cresswells is a black and white Grade II listed four-bedroom house Ombersley, where

near Droitwich Spa. most of the buildings are historic half timbered. Its rear garden has

paved with herringbone bricks and is surrounded by plants. The rest of the gardens include cobbled paved areas set into brick paths, lawns, brick-built barbecue and herbaceous borders. Inside, there's a drawing room with inglenook fireplace and wood-burning stove and beamed ceiling, sitting room, study and large kitchen. £245,000

country looking for old. unused Web site www.teak-antiquity.com: more smoke whipping back in the they won't rust and it would have cook's face, or kippering everyone He got the idea for the company through Allan Morris (01905 797755). to be a very determined burglar who Continental Awnings, 01803 Lampshop's Star Lantern else in range. Made of cement, the could lift it. after bringing back some pieces for 859996. JUMBO SIZE LOFTS! WITH LIVING AREAS UP TO 55FT X 30FT IS FROM CITY STATE OF THE STATE